

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Volume 26 : Number Two : Summer 2005

Christian Maturity

21st Century Ministers

Surrendering to God's Plan

Victim to Victimizer?

Leadership Education

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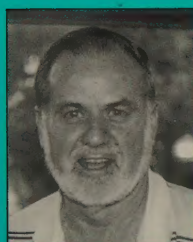
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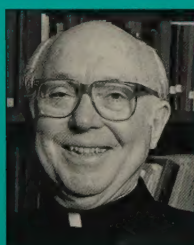
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JAMES J. GILL, S.J., M.D., a priest and psychiatrist, died peacefully on July 29, 2003, after a courageous battle with prostate and bone cancer.

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Manuscripts should be submitted to the Executive Editor, Linda Amadeo, either (1) as e-mail attachments in any Windows-based (not Macintosh) word-processing program from 2000 or earlier or (2) by mail (see addresses below). Unaccepted mailed manuscripts will not be returned unless submitted with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 double-spaced pages), with no more than 6 recommended readings; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing. When quoting the Bible, the New Revised Version of the Bible is preferred.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide author name(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

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Editor's Page

LEADERSHIP FOR THE HEALTH OF THE WORLD

As I write this Editor's Page, the world mourns the death of one of the great leaders of the twentieth century, Pope John Paul II. No matter what else one may say of him, he was a great leader, a man who had a vision of a world different from the one into which he was born and who worked all his life to move the world in that direction.

The vision was, of course, God-inspired, deeply Christian in its inspiration. He knew, firsthand, the horrors brought into the world by an exclusive, racist vision of a "brave, new world." He believed passionately that God wants a world in which human beings live with one another in harmony and friendship, live as brothers and sisters because they are, in fact, sons and daughters of one God. He worked tirelessly to foster that vision, reaching out to men and women of different religions and of none, asking for forgiveness for the past sins against the dream of God by his own church.

He demonstrated what one man imbued with a vision and with the courage and tenacity to do what he could to bring about that vision, could achieve. It is possible to work for God's dream in this world and to make a difference. Both in the political realm and in the religious realm we need leaders who have a vision of what God wants, who have the humility to test that vision against the wisdom of the centuries, of the tradition, in other words, and the courage to try to convince others to embrace a similar vision and to work together to do what they can to make it a reality in this world.

I leave it to others to tell us how Pope John Paul II came to his vision and to the maturity and the courage that animated his life and work. I am aware that he was a charismatic person, that he had a combination of talents that is rather unique. Such a person is a gift of God and upbringing that cannot be programmed. But education and formation programs can be developed that will not only not stifle such talent, but even foster it, and foster the lesser talents that any society and church needs in order to be part of the movement

toward the kind of world God wants. In this issue we offer some advice on what such education and formation programs might look like.

We have gone against our usual practice and included the rather lengthy article "Forming Ministers for the Twenty-First Century" by Luisa Saffiotti, Ph.D. We believe that this article needs to be taken seriously by all those who train people for ministry in the church, whether these ministers are seminarians, members of religious congregations or laypeople. Formation for ministry has come a long way since the Second Vatican Council brought fresh air into seminaries and formation programs for members of religious congregations. But there is still more to be done if ministerial training programs are to produce the type of person needed in roles of leadership in the church of the twenty-first century. Saffiotti's article will, we hope, be a spur to move in the needed directions.

Early on in his career as a Jesuit psychiatrist, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT's founder, James Gill, S.J., M.D., showed remarkable prescience about the type of formation for leadership the church needed after the Second Vatican Council. He spoke and wrote often on formation. Because his ideas on training for leadership still have relevance and, in some cases, still need to be implemented, we decided to reprint the article "Educating for Leadership," first printed in the fall issue of 1983, as a complement to the article by Luisa Saffiotti. Jim was genial in his ability to relate the best findings of social science to issues in the church. We are still learning from him.

We did not originally think of "Surrendering to God's Plan for Us" by Gerald Fagin, S.J., in terms of formation for leadership. But once we decided on these other articles, we saw that Fagin's insights made sense, also, in terms of training for ministerial leadership. After all, in leadership roles ministers often need to be able to move graciously to "God's Plan" when, for any number of reasons, their "Plan A" will not work.

Finally, I hope that my own article, "Christian Maturity through Ignatian Spirituality," will contribute to our thinking and planning on how to form ministers who will be able to help others to become what God desires, "human beings fully alive." Pope John Paul II would be the first to remind us that his leadership, his ministry and, indeed, his life grew from the bedrock of his relationship with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The issue is rounded out by two personal reflections that are beautifully written and that will, we believe, help our readers. In "Beauty, Deep Beauty," Margaret Cessna, H.M., expresses the sorrow and the joy of losing her beloved mother. Perhaps her article will help readers to mourn their own losses and to recall the joys of loving and being loved by those who have died. The anonymous author of "From Victim to Victimizer?" makes us aware of the terrible consequences of sexual abuse of children and of the possible repercussions on the next generation. We can be grateful to this courageous author for articulating her own agony and how she was able to recognize the virus that could have impacted her dealings with her own chil-

dren. Finally, Jim Torrens, S.J., with his usual flair and wisdom, helps readers to think about humility in poem and reflection. Jim's poems and wise reflections have graced every issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT almost since its inception. What a blessing!

So, dear reader, we offer you these articles in hope and in trust. May they help you to be better Christian ministers in whatever form your ministry takes.

A question to all our readers: Our publisher, Regis University of Denver, is working with us to make HUMAN DEVELOPMENT accessible on the Internet. We would like to know how many of our readers would like to subscribe to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT online through the World Wide Web. Would you take the time to respond to this question by e-mail to KATE8333@aol.com?

Bill Barry S.J.

William A. Barry, S.J., Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief

GOOD ADVICE TO HELP STROKE VICTIMS

This came to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT through the Internet. Read it. It may help you help a friend.

A woman, Susie, is recouping at an incredible pace for someone who had a massive stroke — all because Sherry, another woman, saw Susie stumble — that is the key that isn't mentioned below — and then Sherry asked Susie the three key questions. So simple, and yet invaluable information. This literally saved Susie's life.

SOMETHING WE ALL NEED TO KNOW — IS IT A STROKE?

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions: (In Susie's case, Sherry saw her stumble; noticing this led her to ask Susie the following questions.)

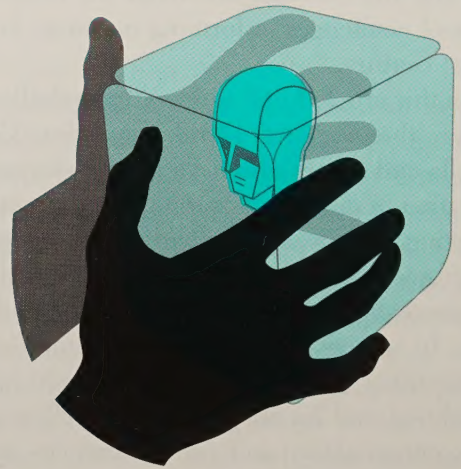
- * Ask the individual to SMILE.
- * Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.
- * Ask the person to SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE.

If he or she has trouble with ANY of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately, and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher. After discovering that a group of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. They presented their conclusions at the American Stroke Association's annual meeting last February. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

Be a friend and share this article with as many friends as possible. It could save their lives! For more information about strokes, visit www.strokeassociation.org.

Forming Ministers FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Luisa M. Saffiotti, Ph.D.



The following article is unusually long for HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. We decided to publish it because we deemed it important for formation programs for ministry. Luisa Saffiotti, Ph.D., makes a passionate case for a formation program that includes not only coming to terms with one's own psychological dynamics but also facing the challenges of the multicultural reality of our world. Ministry in the name of Christ requires more than intellectual knowledge; the person of the minister must be engaged and be challenged by the complexities of the modern world. This article will, we hope, contribute to the needed conversation about how to form ministers for the twenty-first century. — The Editor.

Devastating civil and international wars are destroying entire societies; sexual trafficking is enslaving children and women; hate crimes are soaring as intolerance and resentments are fueled by current politics; the environment is ravaged for the sake of corporate profit, leaving more and more people without water and arable land and sickened by toxic pollutants. As the twenty-first century begins, we are confronted by a set of global and local priorities urgently calling for attention, requiring a certain type of mission response and of minister. We also are confronted by a constellation of psychological characteristics typical of current candidates for ministry. The combination of the current context for min-

As the twenty-first century begins, we are confronted by a set of global and local priorities urgently calling for attention, requiring a certain type of mission response and of minister.

istry and the current candidates for ministry raises a series of challenges in forming ministers for the twenty-first century.

In this article I will address these challenges, drawing on the work of David Couturier, Gary Riebel-Estrella and others who have written eloquently on the formation of ministers for the current times, while also reflecting on my own experience as a psychologist working with people in ministry, particularly in formation contexts, both as a psychotherapist and as an educator. In writing about “ministers” and “candidates,” my intention is to include individuals in religious life, priesthood and lay ministry. I am well aware of both the commonalities and the differences among ministries in these different contexts. At times, I will describe realities that specifically refer to religious life, or priesthood, or lay ministry. Mostly, I will discuss situations that apply across the three categories of ministers. In writing about “forming ministers” my focus will be on initial formation, but the concerns raised extend to the continuing formation of current ministers.

My goal in writing this article is to focus attention on the dramatic global and local realities confronting us, to address the urgent need to form ministers capable of seeing these realities as they are and of responding meaningfully to them — in concrete solidarity with those who suffer most, and able to be both pastoral and prophetic in working to alleviate not only the suffering itself, but also the conditions creating the suffering — and to consider some of the factors that need to be present in individual candidates and in their formation programs if ministers are to be equipped to offer transformative Gospel responses to the situations of our suffering world.

I begin by describing the global and local context for ministry in this historical moment. In global terms, we are seeing the emergence of priorities and chal-

lenges vastly different from those typical over most of the last century. We are in a world in which poverty is exacerbated by spreading religious and ethnic conflicts and resulting displacement of millions, by ecological devastation and by the AIDS pandemic. As Couturier, Capuchin friar, psychologist and past president of the UN non-governmental organization Franciscans International, noted in a presentation to the Order in 2004, “Gone is the confident world of modernity. Its religious constructs of certitude, universality and uniformity have been replaced by the *discourses of concern* for traditions lost, claims ignored, rights denied, positions assumed, voices suppressed and histories denied.”

CONTEXT FOR MINISTRY IN 21ST CENTURY

As the twenty-first century begins, attention is focused on the extreme suffering in the world, and it is in the way that we collectively respond to that suffering that “God will be lovingly revealed and/or loudly denied.” The “world in extremis,” as Couturier defines it, is the context of ministry in our time, and it is necessary to form ministers capable of responding effectively to this context. The widespread suffering we see reflects a profound structural disorder that requires nothing less than structural conversion if it is to be addressed effectively. Increasingly, Couturier writes, “injustices are carried in the institutions and hidden in the structures of contemporary life.”

Social sin and social virtue need to become categories for thinking about and understanding our world and our role in it. The individual level of analysis is no longer adequate for understanding and effectively addressing the dramatic problems all around us. However, the “market mentality” that increasingly pervades all our social relationships, conditioning our attitudes, behaviors and expectations, poses a huge challenge to shifting our thinking to more “social” terms and to embracing genuine solidarity with others who suffer.

DESPERATELY SEEKING MEANING

The challenge is compounded by the fact that so many are not at all aware of the market mindset (their own and that of the culture around them) and its implications. In all societies, we see legions of people, including those most well-off materially, who are des-

erately seeking some meaning in their lives, and regions, especially among those living in the most difficult circumstances, who have lost hope in a better future.

This time of social and cultural transitions is also witnessing religion's attempt across societies to redefine its social role — a process complicated by the widespread “commercialization” of different spiritualities, with many spiritual options promising a type of immediate happiness and well-being that easily slide into denial of the dramatic realities all around and into failure to engage them responsibly. In this historical moment, we also have unprecedented opportunities for global communication, collaboration and pooling resources of all types to effect structural changes beneficial not just to the privileged few but rather to the vast majorities of those who struggle most.

Regarding some of the local dimensions of the contemporary context for ministry, Divine Word Missionary Gary Riebe-Estrella, an expert on the challenges of cultural diversity in formation for ministry, reminds us that in the United States we are in a church painfully divided by social class and racism and increasingly polarized theologically; a church, which, thus, becomes a counter-sign to the coming of God's reign.

Riebe-Estrella underscores the importance of clearly naming this reality of division for ministers-in-formation and of educating them on the theological aberration it constitutes. The presence in the U.S. Church of growing numbers of non-white Catholics (mostly immigrants), who live in great economic precariousness, often without legal status, and who are not experiencing the same degree of integration into the mainstream experienced by earlier waves of mostly European Catholic immigrants in the last century, constitutes a local face of the “world in extremis” that compels attention and meaningful ministerial response. As Riebe-Estrella has said, the mission of the U.S. church in the twenty-first century needs to be true catholicization” and not “Americanization” via the melting-pot” model, as was the case in the twentieth century.

MINISTERS OVERWHELMED BY WORK

Another reality of ministry in the U.S. is that the majority of ministers, particularly priests, are overwhelmed by the amount of work required of them, as ministry becomes more complex and stressful, with

Another reality of ministry in the U.S. is that the majority of ministers, particularly priests, are overwhelmed by the amount of work required of them, as ministry becomes more complex and stressful, with ever-fewer individuals to share the load.

ever-fewer individuals to share the load. An average priest, for instance, easily works sixty to seventy hours per week on ministry alone, according to Couturier. Many ministers are further weighed down by efforts to maintain old structures, houses and programs that are no longer viable in their present forms, but that have not yet been closed or transformed in response to the changing circumstances. This situation leaves many ministers with little energy and enthusiasm for justice and peace work, or for forming others in that dimension of ministry. Overall, male religious and priests seem more vulnerable to this fatigue than do women religious and lay ministers. My experience is that, for several decades, some communities of women religious have been at the forefront of creative initiatives for social justice.

The current context creates an urgent need for ongoing reflection on the role of ministry (especially consecrated/ordained ministry), for ministry candidates to be formed for such reflection and for making a meaningful commitment with full awareness of the realities and the needs of the world to which they will be ministering. As many have observed, “business as usual” simply won't work anymore. At least, it won't be effective in attending to the complex, urgent needs of the faithful. We need to form ministers for attention to our world in extremis and for the capacity to respond meaningfully to it.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MINISTERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

In light of the context just described, what are some of the characteristics necessary in contemporary ministers?

Ministers today need to be capable of raising their voices to name plainly what is not right in the world.

— *Ministers need to embody a shift from the twentieth century's "turn toward the subject" to the twenty-first century's "turn toward the social."* Developmentally speaking, one could say that the latter builds on the former, with the focus on the subject (positively understood both in terms of self-awareness and willingness to do personal work of healing and growth, and also as attention to individuals in their suffering) as a prerequisite for being able to focus attention on broader social issues (engaging in meaningful ministry that addresses compelling realities in society as a whole).

A conscious turn toward the social in formation would be effective if it included mechanisms by which communities could collectively become aware of their degree of concrete commitment to social justice, solidarity with those most in need and on the margins and genuine community. Such a turn would constitute a healthy psychological and psychosocial progression, one that needs to occur both within individuals and within groups in order to form ministers and communities ready to address the realities of our time. It is important for both individuals and communities to turn inward to do necessary healing and growth work, in order then to be able to move outward and serve as effective ministers and agents of transformation.

A challenge for all contemporary ministers is developing what Couturier calls a new "international mission culture," characterized by a focus on God's compassion for the whole world, "an enlivening of the quality of prayer and communion, a renewed attentiveness to mission across borders and cultures and a life-long formation that understands its role in the 'ecology of disparity' in which we find ourselves." The intercultural reality of our local civic, worship and formation/ministry communities means that building skills for "international compassion" is critical not just for reaching across national boundaries, but also, and

more immediately, for promoting genuine fraternal relating in the home communities.

Riebe-Estrella underscores the need for ministers to be able to "celebrate a world of profound differences" and to participate in and help build a "community of distinct communities" — far more challenging than simply encouraging different groups to blend into a melting pot that dilutes differences and exonerates one from having to understand, value and build community with very different people.

Marist Father Ted Keating emphasizes that today's ministers should be specifically formed to handle the difficult pastoral needs of the most marginalized — including the poor, the disenfranchised and the exploited, as well as Catholics who are gay/lesbian, divorced and remarried and young and trying to find their way in a hyper-sexualized and materialistic society. Because ministers are increasingly called to be present at the margins, they need to be given tools to work through effective ways of responding to these difficult pastoral situations without compromising fidelity to the church.

CALLED TO PROPHECY

— *Ministers are called to be prophetic.* They are called to read the signs of the times, ready to challenge and to empower others, cultivating, in the words of Sister of St. Joseph of Peace Kathleen Pruitt, "the endurance to see things as they are and the intuition that things as they are might one day be transformed into things not yet seen...[into] God's vision of what 'can be.'" Ministers today need to be capable of raising their voices to name plainly what is not right in the world, even when this makes their listeners uncomfortable, and of leading the way toward building the transformed reality that "can be" if enough people collaborate to make it happen.

Prophetic ministry and leadership must be grounded in a contemplative relationship with God. It is crucial and urgent to form individuals with a capacity for contemplation, for creating greater spaciousness and stillness inside, within which to nurture the intimate communication with God that sustains and directs meaningful ministry — including, especially, active apostolic ministry. Pruitt observes that contemplation is at the core of prophetic leadership: "A truly prophetic word emanates from in-touchness with the heart of

God. It arises in the context of community gathered in contemplative/obedient listening to God's Spirit."

— *Ministers today need to be rooted in a commitment to growth and wholeness, personally and in the way ministry is approached.* Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Honduras states that the minister of the twenty-first century will need to be a "complete minister, whose ministerial base is the Gospel." A minister who integrates physical and mental health, spiritual, academic, pastoral and communal dimensions; who integrates the socio-anthropological with the theological; who does not separate spirituality and pastoral practice, evangelization and work for the good of humanity. "The coherence and transparency of ministerial life will be the focal point that illumines those who roam around searching for an answer to the situation in which we live."

THE FORMATION CONTEXT

Given the context for ministry today, and given the type of ministers needed to respond effectively to that context, what do we actually see in formation settings today? Specifically, are there any characteristics of the formation context that could be obstacles to forming effective ministers for the twenty-first century? Indeed, there are. I will consider several potentially problematic psychological characteristics of individuals in formation and of the community dimension of formation.

There are six psychological realities, typical of many current candidates, that can make it difficult for them to respond effectively to the needs of contemporary ministry. In my years of working with men and women in formation, I have observed these psychological realities present more among men than among women, and more among candidates for priesthood and religious life than among lay people entering ministry.

Lack of awareness of the world. The first psychological reality is a *lack of in-depth awareness about the world situation*, the urgency with which it is necessary to respond and the nature and implications of true international solidarity with this world "in extremis." Every minute of every day, twenty-two children under age five die from lack of food, clean water, basic medicines; every minute of every day, \$3.5 million goes to global military spending; every day, one billion people try to survive on less than \$1; by the year 2025, two-thirds of the world population will not have access to water if we continue consuming water at

There are six psychological realities, typical of many current candidates, that can make it difficult for them to respond effectively to the needs of contemporary ministry.

current rates.

This is the face of our world today. What does it mean for ministry candidates to sit with these realities and let them sink in? Do they allow these facts to register in any deep way? Do these facts question them on their own habits, patterns of spending and using water and food, awareness of what it means for them to sign on as ministers of a Gospel that explicitly sides with the poor and decries their oppression?

Many candidates enter formation so profoundly conditioned by and comfortably settled into the prevailing materialistic culture that it is difficult for them to look with a critical eye at their own lifestyles. During recent visits to formation communities, I experienced this situation first-hand. In one case, a candidate had been helping himself from the community's common purse to more than \$100 per month for dining out and films. When asked to reduce his spending, he could not understand what the problem was with "treating himself" to these entertainments, considering how hard he was working in his studies. In another case, several individuals in a formation house were frequently ordering clothes, shoes, books and gadgets from catalogs or the Internet, with no apparent motivation to distinguish between purchases based on genuine "need" and purchases made to satisfy "wants."

The "religion of the market" is so powerful that one needs to resist actively being swept away by it. As Couturier noted in his 2004 presentation on Franciscan formation, many candidates go through formation without ever confronting (let alone changing) their underlying economic assumptions. The cultural conditioning is so strong that "the economic structures on which their charitable activities and cultural sensitivities are developed are presumed just and beyond critique." Powerful cultural conditioning also means that many individuals, even those in ministry, are not disturbed enough by the dire situations of so many

The third frequently observed psychological reality is a “disconnect” between the ideals of justice and peace that candidates bring into formation and their capacity to act consistently from those ideals.

other human beings to change their own behaviors and choices. These individuals often do not even realize that the suffering of others (hunger, environmental degradation that compromises food and water supplies, loss of work or work in subhuman conditions) frequently is linked to their own unexamined lifestyle habits and patterns of consumption. Failure to be sufficiently aware and disturbed may be possible, at least in part, “because the poor across our tracks and beyond our borders are among ... the world’s ‘permissible victims’... the ones ‘whose lives and dignity can be — and are — violated with little social outrage, public notice or civic protest’ ... the ones whose cries, however intense, persistent or determined, are made inaudible or tuned out in the great discussions and moral discourses of our churches and institutions.”

Preference for traditional forms. The second psychological reality typical of many candidates for ministry today is their *preference for and adherence to traditional forms of living their Catholicism*. Many younger Catholics describe themselves as having a traditional view of liturgy, ministry and religious life. Among these younger candidates and ministers one often sees a tendency to relegate “social justice” concerns to the fifty-and-over “Vatican II generation.” Several studies have found that younger clergy often adopt a “cultic” model of priesthood, emphasizing sacramental ministry and distinctions between priest and laity over the older generation’s “servant leader” model, which emphasizes social involvement and close collaboration between priest and laity. Their model of ministry can keep some of these younger ministers from fully appreciating the urgency of the current global situation and meaningfully addressing the realities of extreme suffering and injustice.

It is one of the tasks of formation to open candidates’ eyes so they can see the suffering world and be moved to respond to it as a Gospel imperative. Another task is to help candidates avoid the “either-or” thinking that pits commitment to social justice against fidelity to the traditions of sacramental ministry by encouraging an integrated approach, where effective work for justice is grounded in fidelity to prayer, contemplation, Eucharist and the community of the church.

In many of the so-called “developed” countries, where ministers are aging and there are few vocations, there is a growing “malaise” among ordained ministers that seeks security in a return to conservatism, a conservatism that, in the words of Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga, involves a “refusal to question, to update, to confront socio-politico-economic phenomena that demand new forms of insertion into society and into the human groups who would receive ... ministerial service. This way, ministers, especially ordained ministers, risk making themselves marginal.”

Ambivalence toward poverty and the poor. The third frequently observed psychological reality is a “disconnect” between the ideals of justice and peace that candidates bring into formation and their capacity to act consistently from those ideals. Couturier’s extensive psychological research with men and women in religious life has demonstrated such a disconnect, leading him to the conclusion that the majority of these individuals, while sincerely believing in compassion and desiring to help others in need, are constrained by a fundamental ambivalence toward the poverty and plight of the poor. Several studies show that, despite their high ideals of service and self-sacrifice for others, many candidates and ministers show tendencies toward aggression, domination of others, conflict avoidance and excessive dependency.

My clinical experience evaluating candidates and ministers and working with them in psychotherapy is consistent with these findings. Thus, Couturier writes in the 2004 presentation, “high vocational ideals for social concern and justice are not enough to presume that individuals within religious life or entering religious life have an effective capacity for solidarity with the poor.... [T]he social imaginations of those studied are often enough constructed out of a compromise between high vocational ideals and inconsistent and largely unconscious personal needs.”

The Nygren-Ukeritis study of religious life in 1993 similarly found that congregational leaders were nam-

ing values for religious life (including compassion, solidarity with the poor, social justice), but that, in many cases, communities were not living by them, and formation programs were not transmitting them. This inconsistency between individuals' beliefs and ideals and their unresolved (often unacknowledged) emotional needs compromises their ability to make a meaningful commitment to a life of ministry. Formation must address this psychological ambivalence at the root of many ministers' difficulty in concretely living out their ideals.

Psychological baggage. A fourth psychological reality among candidates for ministry is that *many of them carry considerable psychological baggage*, which can interfere substantially with their capacity to attend meaningfully to much beyond their personal issues. Those issues typically include lack of a clear personal identity, emotional and relational immaturity, low self-esteem, personality problems, histories of interpersonal trauma, low-grade depression, issues of loss, fear of discomfort and insecurity, a tendency toward conformity and harm avoidance, the absence of models of fidelity and perseverance in their lives and difficulty trusting that fulfillment can indeed come through healthy self-sacrifice and dedication to ideals of service. Candidates carrying unfinished business in these areas often go through formation struggling to manage interpersonal relations, intimacy and sexuality, authority and power and their need for self-gratification.

Not surprisingly, it is difficult for these individuals to be fully present to formation. If they do complete initial formation, many enter ministry inadequately equipped to handle the challenges that await them. Moreover, because of their psychological fragility, these individuals can find it overwhelming to confront the painful realities of injustice and acute suffering in our world and are often too "shut down" or too preoccupied with their own struggles to respond effectively in the face of those realities.

It is important for formators to think carefully about the advisability of admitting into formation programs individuals with serious unresolved psychological issues, and about the implications of underestimating the impact of those issues on formation and on subsequent capacity for ministry. Many individuals participate in some counseling during their time in formation. In certain cases, the seriousness of the issues requires an intensity of therapeutic work that makes it impossible for the candidate to attend profitably to

It is important for formators to think carefully about the advisability of admitting into formation programs individuals with serious unresolved psychological issues ...

both formation and therapy. When this occurs, it is helpful to take some time away from formation to focus on the healing work, in order to then resume formation better able to participate fully in it.

Candidates entering middle-class religious life. A fifth psychological challenge appears when *candidates coming from backgrounds of significant socio-economic deprivation enter the comfortable middle-class context of clerical or religious life* — the actual situation for increasing numbers of candidates from developing countries seeking admission to formation programs and congregations in the United States. What tensions, contradictions, ambivalences are created by inviting these candidates to embrace poverty and solidarity with the poor while introducing them to a lifestyle that is immeasurably easier and more secure than the lives of true poverty they knew back home? How do these dynamics affect who it is that seeks admission to formation programs in this country, with what underlying motivations? How will these dynamics affect the way candidates approach the vows and ministry?

Formators and those in leadership need to be asking these questions. A psychologist colleague recently shared his experience working with a formation community that included a number of young men from an extremely poor country. They had been vigorously recruited to the program, promised opportunities to study in the United States and not questioned in depth about their vocational intentions. Despite considerable struggles with language learning and cultural adaptation, these young men were promoted through formation. As time passed, several of them asked for larger and larger sums of spending money, which they used to fill large suitcases with expensive gifts to take home — what was expected of them as future "fathers" who had

already attained a high-status position in their home culture, given their foreign training and ministerial roles. Though several of these men were clearly struggling with their commitment to celibate chastity, they plainly said that they were not willing to give up their soon-to-be-achieved priestly status, with the power and prestige it conferred on them and their families.

What is happening here? How are candidates such as these affected by being brought to a very different cultural context, where the lifestyle tells them it is normative to be comfortable and acquire nice things, and where there is little evidence that Gospel ministry necessarily involves the sacrifice of genuine solidarity with the poor in daily life?

Coming from a post-modern culture. The sixth psychological reality is that *candidates are coming to formation and ministry from a post-modern culture.* The post-modern world is complex, pluralistic, and offers — but only to those who have access to them — countless, ever-changing options (in consumer products, lifestyles, spiritualities, ways to make a living, even partners). Exposure to such a social context can produce greater tolerance for diversity, but also can result in a greater focus on the subjective, in more fluid, less well-defined personalities, and in greater difficulty, even unwillingness to accept lasting commitments. The post-modern mentality often leads to greater psychological insecurity and instability, which, in turn, contribute to a focus on enjoying today without much sense of responsibility for tomorrow, and without much inclination for critical analysis of current social, political and cultural realities.

Moreover, in the United States in particular, there is a dominant cultural vision that exalts individualism as the highest form of being and personal success as the ultimate confirmation of a meaningful life, thereby sending a clear message that fraternity, compassion and service are values of secondary importance, at best, values to be tolerated, even admired, but not to be encouraged as the primary motivators for lifestyle choices and commitments. We should also note that, among the majority of younger people affected by the post-modern mentality, there is a smaller group of individuals who already possess a solid personality structure and a clear sense of identity, and for whom the perceptual and conceptual shifts typical of post-modernity, particularly the emphasis away from institutions and structures as we have known them, actually create positive opportunities for flexibility and creativ-

... often, candidates for religious life and priesthood do not see much modeling that places justice and peace concerns at the center of the shared life of ministers.

ity to be channeled into new forms of collaboration and action in response to the world's urgent needs.

Next, what are some of the potentially problematic characteristics of the community dimensions of formation?

YEARNING FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS IN COMMUNITY

Ministry candidates today are often yearning for healthy relationships lived in the context of community. What experience of community are they actually finding, particularly in formation contexts? Frequently, they see men and women who are significantly overworked and stressed by the demands of ministry, with a resulting impoverishment of community life. Moreover, they see communities pressured and stretched thin to continue operating old structures (often barely viable), with the risk that “maintenance replaces mission.” In such stressful pastoral environments, not only does the quality of relationships easily deteriorate, but also attention to justice and peace concerns, particularly as these apply to community lifestyle, can seem a “luxury communities can ill afford,” as Couturier concedes. More than a few religious and priests see justice and peace concerns as an optional dimension of their vocations, and many are not aware of the impact of their personal lifestyle choices on questions of justice, peace and environmental integrity. This means that, often, candidates for religious life and priesthood do not see much modeling that places justice and peace concerns at the center of the shared life of ministers.

Of course, there are some religious communities (both of women and of men, but especially of women) that are intentionally quite attentive to these concerns and are leaders in redefining the parameters of community life so that it does witness to the centrality of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. The consensus is that, in most cases, women's communities live a simpler and more frugal lifestyle than do men's com-

communities — in part because of choice and commitment, in part because of more limited financial resources. Still, the lifestyle of many religious and clerical communities (situated in comfortable residential neighborhoods, in well-appointed, large houses, with household help, late model cars, abundant high-quality food and drink, vacation time, good health care) can represent an image of religious life and ministry that attracts candidates who are not at all inclined toward being the kind of minister needed in the twenty-first century.

A recent clinical experience sharply underscored this for me. I was supervising the psychological evaluation of a young man from a developing country who was applying to enter a religious community in the Eastern United States. The community had flown him over and was, in their own words, “winning and dining” him, taking him to see their headquarters and other houses in the region to have an experience of their life and ministry. During the evaluation interviews, the man was asked why he wanted to become a priest. Without skipping a beat, he answered, “To live in a big house, drive a big car and have a credit card.” When reminded that this particular order was dedicated to working with the poor, he promptly stated that he did not like the poor.

JUSTICE AND PEACE NOT CENTRAL CONCERNS

Beyond overwork, high stress and the habit-forming domination of the market culture, there are some deeper reasons for the fact that, in many ministerial communities, justice and peace are simply not central concerns. A primary reason for this, according to Couturier, seems to be that there is an “underlying psychological ambivalence and institutional defense against the conversion needed to move our communities toward the international compassion required of us.”

Observing the dynamics around authority and power in certain communities, one sees that, unwittingly, they recapitulate unjust biases and patterns in society, rather than witnessing against them. Formation programs today are usually — and necessarily, given the psychological issues of many candidates — focused on individuals’ personal work of healing and growth. They readily offer valuable opportunities for counseling, therapy and spiritual direction. Formation systems are focused primarily on the personal conversion of individuals, but rarely “are they conversant with the lit-

There is a growing number of religious who prefer to live alone and have no desire to involve themselves in any of the institutional works or concerns of their communities.

erature and the skills of the structural conversion of religious communities....Rare are the communities conversant with the assumptions of their organizational dynamics, aware of their shared social defenses and able to confess their social sin as a group” — and rarer still are those committed to raising those issues with the individuals they are forming.

Another psychological reality potentially affecting candidates for ministry is the organizational aversion (a term used by Couturier) increasingly present in religious communities. There are growing numbers of religious who prefer to live alone and have no desire to involve themselves in any of the institutional works or concerns of their communities. (I am not referring here to situations in which religious assigned to ministries geographically distant from their communities live alone but remain tightly connected to and active in the concerns of those communities.) Organizational aversion is a looming threat to ministerial work centered on justice and peace and focused on international compassion because so much of that work is about the conversion of structures (within religious communities, religious institutions, and within larger societal institutions). Religious exclusively focused on personal and interpersonal dynamics will be at some loss to understand, explain or help in the resolution of structural, organizational and institutional failures.

FORMATION SUBCULTURES

A final potentially problematic aspect of the group dimension of formation is the presence of different “cultures of formation,” often within the same congregation. Studying this issue, Couturier in his 2004 presentation identified seven formation subcultures, which he defines as distinct and sometimes competing systems of beliefs, emotions, rituals and tools. Each of the cultures focuses on a central aspect of the church’s

These different formation subcultures can become identities which individuals take on to define who they are and which easily create separations, even barriers, between themselves and individuals in other subcultures.

thought since Vatican II, but they are “enclosed cultures of religious life” with a distinct profile and set of expectations and, in their distinctiveness, they have become “social defenses used unconsciously to thwart the enlivening of religious communities for the 21st century.” These different formation subcultures can become identities which individuals take on to define who they are and which easily create separations, even barriers, between themselves and individuals in other subcultures. This clustering by subculture reinforces the all-too frequent reality that differences lead to separation, and does nothing to further candidates’ capacity for integration around diversity — a skill essential for effective ministry to our world today.

FORMATION CHALLENGES

Considering the current context for ministry, the characteristics of effective ministers and some psychological dimensions affecting formation today, several formation challenges emerge. The next section identifies a general challenge and then describes some specific challenges at the individual and at the community levels of formation.

The general challenge has to do with forming for conversion — at both individual and structural levels. Forming for conversion includes forming for the ability to step back and observe oneself, one’s own choices,

one’s way of life and the structures in which one’s life is embedded. Of course, it is crucial that formation addresses personal and interpersonal issues. It then needs to move intentionally beyond these levels to the often neglected area of healing, growth and transformation within community. Formation needs to help candidates attend to individual conversion, while also naming and addressing the structural changes necessary at an institutional level. Effective formation for conversion conveys the equal importance of addressing both personal development (going inward) and community transformation (going outward as an agent of change).

The general challenge of forming for conversion involves embracing four specific tasks.

The first is *educating candidates on the real meanings and causes of the extreme situation of our world*. Couturier cites Jesuit Peter Henriot that poverty is a “consequence of the human (not divine) design of our social, political, economic and relational structures...a reality that we structure and which we tolerate,” a structural disorder that must be addressed by forming for structural conversion. The devastating conflicts, ecological degradation and widespread, acute poverty we see today are “the explicit outcome of conscious political and economic decisions made by some humans.” They are not an inevitable condition of life.

The second task is *developing a formation discourse and a pedagogy focused not only on diversity (cultural differences), but also on disparity (economic differences)* in order to help candidates cross economic barriers, as well as cultural ones. A new discourse and pedagogy would increase awareness that we are in an “interdependent but unequal world and [would] link more carefully the spiritualities of transcendence and justice....Whereas the crossing of cultural lines implies entering sympathetically into the language and customs of “the other,” the crossing of class lines means a spiritual realignment of one’s horizon of power and responsibility in society, community and church. Today, formation ministry must not only confront a candidate’s sensitivity to and acceptance of cultural diversity, but also his or her readiness to confront the growing economic disparity emerging at every level of society.”

The third task: *forming ministers with the skills and willingness to engage in conflict transformation, peace-building and social forgiveness* — both individually and as members of communities.

And, the fourth task, according to author Ted Keating, writing of "Religious Life's Role in the Approach to Ministry" (*Origins*, Feb. 19, 2004), is that of forming ministers able to hear, answer and issue a prophetic call to conversion, while also recognizing the institutional value of structure, order and clarity.

SKILLS NEEDED BY FORMATORS

What specific skills for conversion do formators need to instill in individual candidates and in communities in order to accomplish these four tasks? Formators need to form individuals for awareness and for dialogue, for openness to conversion. They need to form for a healed, sustainable and robust capacity to be in relationship and to build healthy intimacy — not just with a few close friends, but with a community and with those who are different, transcending the rampant individualism and impoverished relational capacity that are seriously hobbling contemporary ministerial life (and life in society at large). They also need to form for embracing all of creation, including one's own embodied self, and for personal and communal attention to the use of natural resources, to ecological considerations, to health attained and maintained through moderate, judicious use of resources. Moreover, they need to form at both individual and group levels for transparency and accountability — essential dimensions of healthy and transformative relationships that often are not sufficiently modeled in ministry and formation settings.

In my work with formation communities, I have been struck by the lack of transparency often encountered, favored by the difficulty formators and, consequently, their candidates have talking in appropriate, clear and constructive ways about issues of sexuality, authority, power and institutional dynamics. In addition to appropriate conversation on such important issues, regular faith-sharing in community can be particularly effective in promoting transparency, integrity and openness to conversion. The only way candidates will acquire and internalize any of these skills is if formators model them clearly and consistently.

It is also important to form for itinerancy, for the capacity and willingness to go "outside the camp," to be among those "others" relegated to a place outside the familiar center. Couturier emphasizes the importance of the particularly Franciscan virtue of itinerancy in forming Franciscan ministers in this time.

There is a need to form ministers able not only to tolerate but also to build upon and work with differences, even divergence, in local, international and inter-congregational contexts.

CAPACITY FOR ITINERANCY

I suggest that the capacity for itinerancy is essential for all ministers today. "Itinerancy demands going outside the institution, outside culturally conditioned perceptions and beliefs, because it is 'outside the camp' that we meet a God who cannot be controlled. It is 'outside the camp' that we meet the Other who is different and discover who we are and what to do." There is a need to form ministers able not only to tolerate but also to build upon and work with differences, even divergence, in local, international and inter-congregational contexts.

Formators need to form ministers with concrete experience in bridging the gap between their stated ideals and their capacity actually to implement those ideals through lived solidarity with those who suffer. Ideals alone are not sufficient for true solidarity to happen and for effective ministry to unfold. Direct experience is what makes conversion possible. Keating underscores the need for formation to include direct insertion in service to and engagement with the poor. He states that the preferential option for the poor and marginalized should be evident at all levels of formation institutions. Keating further observes that many individuals spend their years in formation disconnected from the neighborhoods in which they live. "Unfortunately, that models a future in ministry that disconnects our various centers of ministry from the social context of the neighborhoods in which they exist."

ACHIEVING A COMMON GOOD

Candidates need to be formed to develop and transmit a vision that not only recognizes current suf-

Forming for this awareness requires that formators themselves be willing to model what sufficiency might look like in the daily life of those committed to ministry today.

fering and injustices, but also offers realistic alternatives and practical strategies for achieving a greater common good grounded in justice. This involves helping them articulate and begin living from a vision that attracts them and that enables them to attract others to “new ways of living that draw us naturally and willingly away from the destructive patterns of consumption and relationships so dominant in our society today,” as Jim Hug, author of “Social Justice 2005,” puts it.

Candidates also need to be formed for sufficiency at every level. This is about discovering what is truly “enough” and distinguishing between needs and wants. It is a considerable challenge in this society to embrace a simplicity of life that allows for at least some experience of saying no to oneself, of going a bit hungry, of living out of “enoughness” in the context of serious global and, increasingly, local deprivation, and of a society so saturated with self-indulgence that it has largely lost the capacity to appreciate fully what it means physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially to struggle with chronic deprivation.

Forming for this awareness requires that formators themselves be willing to model what sufficiency might look like in the daily life of those committed to ministry today. Eating nourishing but simple meals and giving up most snacking between meals; drinking plain water instead of soft drinks; walking more and taking public transportation instead of driving; limiting personal spending to genuine necessities (recognizing what those are); being frugal in the frequency and type of entertainment chosen; becoming aware of patterns of personal use of scarce resources such as water, electricity, paper.

Fidelity to practices such as these gradually establishes a capacity for healthy asceticism in individuals’

lives. Not an old-fashioned asceticism, based on deprivation and chalking up points for being tough on oneself, but rather a relationally-focused asceticism, intended to make more space inside for God by releasing some of our material attachments. As individuals are gradually able to let go of their perceived “need” for certain habits and comforts, they discover greater internal freedom and a greater capacity for compassion and solidarity — particularly international solidarity — with those whose basic needs are never satisfied, let alone their wants.

Especially in the United States, with its culture of comforts and convenience, it is necessary for people, especially ministers, to work on becoming aware of and then letting go of some attachments if they are to “get” the plight of others (of those in extremis) and be able to live and minister in meaningful solidarity with them. Otherwise, ministers risk being so out of touch with the reality of suffering around them that their efforts to respond to that suffering end up being irrelevant.

FORMED FOR ASKING HARD QUESTIONS

Finally, candidates need to be formed for asking hard questions and, in the words of Franciscan theologian Margaret Carney, for doing searching exams on the daily details of lifestyle choices. Carney names the challenge of living a consistency between a public stance of advocacy, protest and work for justice and development, and a personal commitment to “simplicity, frugality, and — dare we say it? — real restriction in the use of a consumer society’s affluence.” She notes that brave attempts to live such consistency have often been met with “a kind of allergic reaction to any curb on personal options.” For example, “in many groups the ecological choices become identified with a ‘green party’ minority. They are something to be tolerated or avoided, but certainly not embraced.” Carney makes clear that she would not advocate a return to the controlling customs and authoritarian discipline of years past. However, she asks, as ministers and as those forming ministers, “should we also forbid honest conversation about our compromises with the ‘perks’ of the upward mobility of the Catholic population of this country? Are we just as gifted in ‘mall skills’ as any other citizen and do we dare see that as incongruous? Is our use of scarce planetary resources exemplary?”

Developing and practicing these skills for conversion require a certain level of maturity and integration,

a capacity for initiative and for taking a stand. The reality is that quite a few candidates lack these requirements and, as noted above, have significant unresolved psychological issues. Until those issues are addressed, they will make it more difficult for individuals to develop the skills just described. It thus becomes essential for formators to encourage candidates to take up their personal healing work while also modeling for them the conversion skills they will eventually need to develop.

JUSTICE AND PEACE AS A CORE DIMENSION

In many formation contexts, considerable energy is spent dealing with individuals' psychological and behavioral problems, with not enough energy spent forming for meaningful commitment to justice and peace work as a core dimension of ministry. Even when formation contexts do provide opportunities to learn about peace and justice and the global context of ministry today, they seldom make any effort to measure the progress of a candidate's commitment to justice and peace and to evaluate that person's capacity to promote justice prior to solemn vows, ordination or commissioning for ministry.

Formation is still largely focused on evaluating individuals' personal and relational skills and their capacity for personal conversion. It does not assess candidates' competencies for the work of justice and structural conversion, which is not considered a "core competency" of initial or ongoing formation. Formators are expected to notice and address deficiencies in candidates' personal and interpersonal development; they are not typically expected to address candidates' "psycho-political literacy."

This points to the need for a new theoretical model for formation work, one that addresses all the dimensions of a candidate's well-being and a community's spiritual growth. It needs to be a model that does not "forget the impact that oppressive social conditions and deteriorating communal structures have on personal and interpersonal well-being ... [and that does not] pathologize or re-interpret oppressive social conditions in only intrapsychic or interpersonal terms."

CANDIDATES CAPABLE OF INTERNATIONAL COMPASSION

Couturier proposes a model, designed in the Franciscan context but applicable to formation work in general, that includes naming the personal, relational

Formation is still largely focused on evaluating individuals' personal and relational skills and their capacity for personal conversion.

and collective levels of psychological well-being, and identifying the values and specific guidelines for action that produce well-being at each level. This model also describes three core sets of skills necessary to form candidates capable of international compassion. "The formator must first have the capacity to help the friar come to know himself, accept himself and change in the direction of his self-proclaimed religious values of charity, compassion, and justice. Then, the formator must have the ability to invite the local community to understand and examine its own relational styles of authority, leadership, and service....At this stage, the local [community] learns to model its own corporate behavior on the non-dominating and non-depriving example of Christ. And, finally, the local community reaches beyond its borders to accept its responsibility as a 'social experiment of peace and reconciliation' in the world today." The model also identifies theological, interpersonal and advocacy skills formators need in order to promote conversion at the personal, interpersonal and structural levels.

Having identified various challenges to formation at the individual level, it is necessary to remember that *individuals alone*, even if equipped with the best personal and interpersonal skills, will not be effective ministers for the twenty-first century, in which so much of the suffering in the world is structural, rooted in social sin. According to Couturier, "Without attentiveness to the dynamics of collective well-being, personal and interpersonal conversion will be trumped by subtle and pernicious dynamics of structural injustices that are carried in the covert customs and conventions of institutions." And as Riebe-Estrella observes, if class and racial differences tear at the fabric of church community, then forming individuals to minister to individu-

Also, communities need to be aware of generational and ideological splits in approaches to justice and peace work.

als only is ultimately a grossly inadequate response. It is necessary to form ministers and communities capable of engaging the system of injustice and the institutions sustaining it.

MINISTERS CAPABLE OF UNDERSTANDING DYNAMICS

Sociologist Robert Bellah has argued that Americans are intentionally unaware of the effect that institutions have on their lives, preferring the illusion that life is based on individual choice and initiative, without attending to the effect that institutions (such as media, business, government, church) have on their choices and priorities. It is crucial to form ministers who can appreciate their roles as members of local and global communities, capable of seeing and understanding the social and the institutional dynamics around them and of calling their communities and the people they serve to respond effectively. Following are several challenges to formation at the community level.

Candidates and communities need to be formed for the twenty-first century's "turn toward the social" — for a more collective and global accountability to complement the personal and interpersonal forms of obedience developed in the twentieth century. They need to be formed to appreciate the impact of their action or inaction on the local and global communities to which they belong and to "read" current social realities, particularly of suffering and injustice, in terms of systems, not just of individual behavior and responsibility. They need to be formed with the courage to look closely at those institutions of which they are part and see the areas of "social sin" needing to be transformed. They need to be formed so that the work of justice and

peace is not what a community does when it has time and energy left over from other more important work, nor what is left to a few highly motivated individuals at the fringes of the group, but rather, so that it becomes the primary task of every community of faith that dares to claim a role in the evangelizing work of the Spirit.

Also, communities need to be aware of generational and ideological splits in approaches to justice and peace work. Formators in particular need to be attentive to the impact of these splits on candidates. It is important to form candidates for an understanding of the generational and ideological dynamics of justice and to work, in community, to listen to different voices and to reconcile the divisions that, ironically, exist around the very task of peace-building.

CULTIVATING A CONTEMPLATIVE AWARENESS

This requires a communal commitment to improving communication and cooperation. Candidates and communities also need to be formed collectively to reflect and pray over what local and international Gospel compassion requires, and formed for the ability to cultivate a contemplative awareness, while also developing an active spirituality that will sustain them in the demands of their ministry. The essence of effective, prophetic ministry is the ability, as individuals and as communities, to listen and to see deeply, to create, in the midst of the busyness and activity, an internal space of stillness and receptivity to God, within which to receive, understand and develop responses to the many needs of the world.

CONCLUSIONS AND INVITATIONS

We are living in a time of extreme and widespread suffering that affects not just individuals, but also entire societies, entire continents. Hunger, violence, illness, displacement, alienation and marginalization resulting from unjust social structures are the daily lot of vast numbers of people, who wait to see if the Gospel will offer a meaningful response to their plight. Pruitt writes that a meaningful response will speak a prophetic word, a word that matters, "a word that is at once starkly practical and realistic, and creatively imaginative and hope-filled." Ministers for our times are "called by the Word-that-matters to be risk-takers for the reign of God ... humbly, persistently to engage outrageous hope" in the midst of pain and suffering, and

untiringly to issue a call to growth and wholeness where there is confusion, uncertainty and instability. In the current context, according to Maria Carmelita de Freitas, ministerial effectiveness will be judged "not by great deeds or institutional structures but rather by a dialoguing presence and the ability to endure, by an uncompromising faithfulness and hope in the midst of crisis, by a disposition to be humble and vigorously prophetic, countercultural, and kenotic."

MINISTERS FORMED FOR CONVERSION

Ministers thus need to be formed not only with the capacity to do local pastoral work with individuals (though this is certainly necessary), but also with the capacity to do social analysis and to engage in systemic thinking, and to extend compassion across national, cultural and economic boundaries. They need to be formed for conversion.

Several psychological characteristics of current candidates, particularly the disconnect between their ideals of justice and solidarity with the suffering and their capacity actually to live out those ideals, and the weighty emotional baggage many of them carry into formation, combined with several characteristics of formation programs today, especially their underlying ambivalence toward structural conversion, may begin to explain why many new ministers do not seem to be effective in moving beyond local pastoral work to offering a broader, even prophetic, Gospel response to the urgent issues of our time.

This situation needs to be understood in a developmental perspective: Things as currently described are certainly not the final word. Many individuals, given the opportunity, grow and heal, acquire and integrate new and more complete understanding of themselves and their world, and attain increased levels of maturity and capacity for effective responding to situations around them. However, not all candidates are equipped to unfold along this kind of developmental trajectory.

CANDIDATES WHO ARE A BETTER FIT

For some, their psychological issues (and other factors mentioned above) seriously limit the possibility of growth and development.

Formators and leadership need to be willing to discern the "formability" of candidates, particularly in terms of their capacity to establish and sustain a pri-

Many individuals, given the opportunity, grow and heal, acquire and integrate new and more complete understanding of themselves and their world.

mary intimate relationship with God and to minister to others out of that relationship, their capacity for healthy intimacy and collaboration, their generosity in putting the needs of others and community ahead of their own, their willingness to be formed and led, and their disposition and competency for the work of justice and conversion.

My hope is that the formation landscape sketched in this article highlights areas needing to be addressed so that formation programs both attract candidates who are a better fit for the realities and demands of ministry in the twenty-first century, and also prepare existing candidates with the skills necessary to be effective ministers for this time. The current reality challenges formators and formation programs to become aware of the assumptions guiding their work, including what kind of ministers they are hoping to prepare, for what kind of ministry, and whether such ministers will, in fact, be able to respond meaningfully to the ministerial realities that await them.

I address the following invitations to all formators, that they might become more conscious and effective in their important work.

- Formators, themselves, need to request adequate preparation for doing the work of formation, including training in the specific skills that will help them develop the capacity for compassion and conversion in their candidates, and better skills for assessing when candidates' psychological issues are serious enough that they interfere with the work of formation.

- Formators need to assess their own capacity for personal and structural conversion, as well as their willingness for and commitment to forming others for conversion.

- Formators need to assess the extent to which their

own lives show consistency between their stated ideals and their actual practice, particularly in community life and in ministry.

- Formators need to examine their readiness, especially in their role as formators, to adjust their own lifestyle and way of relating to others so that they are actually modeling the realities they want candidates to learn and embrace.

- Formators need to develop a way of assessing, over the course of initial formation, candidates' capacity for the work of justice and peace and of conversion (personal and structural); they also need to define specific criteria for readiness in this area that candidates have to meet before receiving solemn vows, ordination or commissioning for ministry.

- Finally, formators and those in leadership in their institutions need to be conscious of the models of formation they are using and of the place in those models of forming for justice and peace and for conversion.

I hope these reflections will join the ongoing conversations about formation and will suggest some areas deserving particular attention as we seek to prepare ministers able to bring a meaningful Gospel response to the urgent needs of our world.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

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Educating for Leadership

James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.

As I mentioned in the Editor's Page, we decided to include this article (partially updated) by the founding editor, the late James Gill, S.J., M.D., which first appeared in the fall 1983 issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, as a complement to the article by Luisa Saffiotti, Ph.D. Jim Gill's insights into training for leadership still have validity and will contribute, we hope, to the ongoing conversation about how to form ministers for the twenty-first century. — The Editor.



With the death of Pope John Paul II, worldwide attention once again has focused on the importance of the role of leadership. But a well-known organizational trainer of executives, Lin Bothwell, has lamented, in his book, *The Art of Leadership*, that among the names of great world leaders suggested by the participants in several hundred leadership programs he has conducted, “a striking similarity among 99 percent of the thousands of names given is that they were all *deceased*.”

Bothwell believes that three phenomena that dominate countries like the United States — rapid social change, large bureaucratic organizations and legalistic norms — may be working against the development and exercise of true leadership. To support his point, he quotes the observation made by Laurence Peter and Raymond Hull in *The Peter Principle*: “Most hierarchies are nowadays so

"We are immunizing a high proportion of our most gifted young people against any tendencies to leadership....Very little in [the young person's] experience encourages him [or her] to think that he [or she] might some day exercise a role of leadership."

encumbered with rules and traditions and so bound in by public laws, that even high employees do not have to lead anyone anywhere, in the sense of pointing out the direction and setting the pace. They simply follow precedents, obey regulations, and move at the head of the crowd. Such employees lead only in the sense that the carved wooden figurehead leads the ship." Bothwell also notes that the mass media have in the past decade "created suspicion and mistrust of all leaders by focusing on the misdeeds of a few. There is broad cynicism as to leaders' motives and the purity of their acts." He also views many people today as being "simply unwilling to take a stand," since being "for" something creates instant enemies. They believe it is "better to speak out of both sides of your mouth than to take a position at all."

STUDENTS SCHOOLED TO AVOID LEADERSHIP

In agreement with Bothwell, John Gardner, in *No Easy Victories*, has stated that "We are immunizing a high proportion of our most gifted young people against any tendencies to leadership....Very little in [the young person's] experience encourages him to think that he might some day exercise a role of leadership. This unfocused discouragement is of little consequence compared with the expert dissuasion the young person will encounter if he is sufficiently bright to attend a college or university. In some institutions today the best students are carefully schooled to avoid leadership responsibilities."

Supporting Gardner's opinion are studies by Ann Howard and Douglas Bray showing that young managers in their mid-twenties working in the Bell

Telephone system are not as highly motivated to advance their careers as were their forerunners just a generation ago. These researchers found that "They are not attracted to power, nor do they defer to it....They don't want to lead; they don't want to follow." All that they desire is "interesting work and satisfying emotional relationships characterized by 'kindness,' 'sympathy,' understanding,' and 'generosity.'"

Even among members of the Jesuit order, complained Father Thomas Clancy, S.J. (former Provincial of the New Orleans Province), in *National Jesuit News* (April 1983), "We have tremendous problems today finding people to take leadership positions." Urging his fellow members of the Order to develop the requisite qualities of zeal and magnanimity, Clancy insisted, "We should encourage everyone to say 'I want to lead the people of God. I want the power to change society.'"

In line with Clancy's thinking, I believe that there are at least three strong reasons why all Christian educational institutions should be taking seriously their continuing opportunity to develop tomorrow's leaders. First, leadership positions are waiting for capable people to fill them, for example, in government, business, military services, education and the church. Second, the successful accomplishment of the goals of such organizations depends on the effectiveness of their leaders, whose competence, in turn, depends in great part on their education. Third, the very act of providing leadership for others and assisting in their attainment of life goals related to their genuine well-being and God-given destiny is in itself a deeply Christian enterprise. Surely the preparation of young men and women for a life of service to others through leadership deserves to be considered one of the major aims of any church-related seminary, college or university.

DEFINITIONS DIFFER WIDELY

Leadership as a subject for discussion found a place in the writings of Plato, Caesar and Plutarch and in the works of ancient Chinese and Egyptian students of the art. But down through the years, almost as many definitions of leadership have been offered as there have been persons attempting to explain the phenomenon. Warren Bennis, in *Administrative Science Quarterly* (Winter 1959), surveyed the leadership literature and concluded, "Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an

endless proliferation of terms to deal with it ... and still the concept is not sufficiently defined."

Gary Yukl, in *Leadership in Organizations*, observes that definitions of leadership have been presented in terms of "individual traits, behavior, influence over other people, interaction patterns, role relationships, occupation of an administrative position, and perception of others regarding legitimacy of influence." Bernard Bass, in *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, similarly notes that "Leadership has been seen as the focus of group process, as a personality attribute, as the art of inducing compliance, as an exercise of influence, as a particular kind of act, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument in goal attainment, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, and as an initiation of structure."

More precisely, Robert Tannenbaum, Irving Weschler and Fred Massarik, in *Leadership and Organization*, defined leadership as "interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals."

Norman Copeland, in *Psychology and the Soldier*, described leadership as "the art of dealing with human nature....It is the art of influencing a body of people by persuasion or example to follow a line of action. It must never be confused with drivership ... which is the act of compelling a body of people by intimidation or force to follow a line of action."

Robert K. Merton, in the *American Journal of Nursing* (1969), identified leadership as "an interpersonal relationship in which others comply because they want to, not because they have to."

Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman, Jr., in *In Search of Excellence*, describe leadership in action terms: "Leadership is many things. It is patient, usually boring, coalition building. It is the purposeful seeding of cabals that one hopes will result in the appropriate ferment in the bowels of the organization. It is meticulously shifting the attention of the institution through the mundane language of management systems. It is altering agendas so that new priorities get enough attention. It is being visible when things are going awry, and invisible when things are working well."

Essentials to be Learned for Leadership

Habit of Making
Just Judgements

Openness to
New Ideas
and Opinions

Art of
Inspiring
Others

Variety of
Leadership
Styles

Sense
of Humor

Patience
with Mistakes

Readiness to
Take Charge

Capacity to
Motivate

Clarity in
Communication
and Instruction

Effective
Decision
Making

Ability to
Establish and
Maintain Trust

Knowing
How to
Relax

Scientific research into leadership has revealed a variety of ways in which leaders are found to differ from their followers.

It's building a loyal team at the top that speaks more or less with one voice. It's listening carefully much of the time, frequently speaking with encouragement and reinforcing words with believable action. It's being tough when necessary, and it's the occasional naked use of power — or the 'subtle accumulation of nuances, a hundred things done a little better,' as Henry Kissinger once put it."

James MacGregor Burns, in his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Leadership*, expresses a belief that the leader's principal task is one of instilling purpose. He also maintains, "Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers." Burns concludes, "Leadership, unlike naked power wielding, is thus inseparable from followers' needs and goals."

QUALITIES OF LEADERS

Scientific research into leadership has revealed a variety of ways in which leaders are found to differ from their followers. These include:

- the ability to initiate and sustain interaction
- personal spontaneity that stimulates spontaneity in others
- capability of attracting the participation of others
- empathy for the feelings of their followers
- the ability to protect the weak and under-chosen

- acceptance rather than rejection of a wide range of member personalities
- encouragement of participation on the part of less capable individuals

Early leadership research was generally directed toward determining what special characteristics were present in the personality of the successful leader. Sociologists and psychologists found that leaders frequently surpassed their followers in intelligence, scholarship, dependability in accepting responsibility, social participation and socioeconomic status. From the 1930s through the 1950s extensive studies were conducted at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan to discover which traits effective leaders usually possess. The ten most commonly identified were: (1) intelligence, (2) ability to get along well with others, (3) skill in the area of technical competence, (4) ability to motivate self and other, (5) emotional stability and self-control, (6) planning and organizing skills, (7) strong desire to achieve a task, (8) ability to use group process, (9) ability to be efficient and (10) decisiveness.

Bothwell has pointed out that not all leaders display all ten of these traits, but no matter which ones they lack, "there are two qualities that set true leaders apart. One is that they have a dream they are determined to see carried out. A second ... is that they are more than just dreamers, they are people of great action." He adds, "Accomplishments do not come from those who dream great dreams, or even from those who have the potential to carry them out. Results are produced by action, action that often inspires others to act." Single acts that consequently result in collective acts, Bothwell believes, are the kind that "change the world."

A LEARNABLE ART

Far from believing, as the disciples of Sir Thomas Galton did a century ago, that leadership should be explained entirely on the basis of traits transmitted from generation to generation through genetic inheritance, most theoreticians today are convinced that the essential qualities and skills involved in leadership can be learned and developed through education and experience. People can learn to communicate clearly, to make effective decisions, to motivate and inspire, to maintain and show respect for and trust in subordinates, to be just in making judgments, to instruct clearly and to be patient with mistakes, to be loyal to follow-

ers and tough in their behalf, to be humble and open to new ideas and different opinions, to keep a sense of humor and to know how to relax.

Potential leaders can also learn to pick an appropriate leadership style to match the task that confronts them. Taking into consideration the leader's own personality, the qualities and needs of followers and the constraints and realities of the environment, along with the goal to be accomplished, leaders can select from among a wide variety of possible ways of acting in particular situations in order to achieve the outcome desired. They can choose for example, from Rensis Likert's four styles: (1) exploitive autocratic, (2) benevolent autocratic, (3) participative, or (4) democratic. They can decide on one of the three styles researched and delineated by Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippett and Ralph White: (1) authoritarian (directive, impersonal, allowing no give-and-take with followers), (2) democratic (encouraging subordinates to communicate openly, to participate in decision making and to work cooperatively), or (3) laissez-faire (giving followers complete autonomy, providing no structure or direction).

A third model of the many possible styles from which leaders can select in view of who they are, how they relate to others, what their needs for control and affiliation are, and what their desire for achievement is — all of which will influence the style they adopt on a particular occasion — has been developed by Bothwell, who has trained nearly 10,000 executives in more than 400 leadership development programs throughout the United States. His range of styles includes:

1. Decide yourself, and order it done.
2. Decide yourself, and convince them to do it.
3. Decide yourself, modify with suggestions, then have them do it.
4. Decide tentatively; they can influence with persuasive argument.
5. Consult individually, decide, then announce.
6. Consult in a group, decide, then announce.
7. Explore and decide as a group while you retain the veto.
8. Explore and decide as a group where all are equal.
9. You decide with constraints, then let them decide without you.
10. Withdraw completely; they decide and act alone.

Obviously, the styles that many leaders select are merely extensions of their own personality and, as

Potential leaders can also learn to pick an appropriate leadership style to match the task that confronts them.

Bothwell admits, "Real life situations are very complex ... [and a] subjective, nonscientific approach, based on your gut-level feelings, reinforced by your reason and experience, can sometimes lead you to the best style to apply."

Social psychologist Bass, in *Stogdill's Handbook*, recalls that the education of leaders — based on the assumption that leadership traits, skills and styles can be *learned* — has been provided in a wide variety of successful ways. Among these are

- coaching by an immediate superior
- guided job experience on a planned basis
- training as an understudy or "assistant to" a high position
- serving a leadership internship
- rotating through a variety of jobs by planned transfers
- placement in a special trainee position
- special project assignments
- participation in trade or professional associations
- involvement in civic projects
- formal classroom lectures
- workshop exercises
- feedback from peers, subordinates, clients and superiors at work
- case or problem discussion groups
- role-playing
- simulation games
- computer-assisted and programmed instruction
- sensitivity training

Bass points out especially that, stimulated by social learning theory, "behavior role modeling which integrates didactic with experiential techniques" has become, dur-

Examples of Leadership Styles

LIKERT

1. Exploitive autocratic
2. Benevolent Autocratic
3. Participative
4. Democratic

LEWIN, LIPPETT & WHITE

1. Authoritarian
2. Democratic
3. Laissez-faire

BOTHWELL

1. Decide yourself, and order it done.
2. Decide yourself, and convince them to do it.
3. Decide yourself, modify with suggestions, then have them do it.
4. Decide tentatively; they can influence with persuasive argument.
5. Consult individually, decide, then announce.
6. Consult in a group, decide, then announce.
7. Explore and decide as a group while you retain the veto.
8. Explore and decide as a group where all are equal.
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ing recent years, increasingly popular as a means of developing leadership qualities and competence.

UNIVERSITY SELF-STUDY

Grounded on scientific research, a statement made by Bass helped to stimulate a remarkably innovative project related to leadership that was conducted at Regis University in Denver, Colorado. Bass wrote: "A developmental learning process occurs in which capacities and skills gained in one stage prepare the leader for new and bigger tasks and responsibilities in later stages. One learns to be a leader by serving as a leader, and one is promoted to higher levels of leadership responsibilities based on past performance and promise of future performance." What Regis did, in view of Bass' observation, was to establish a special task force (as part of the National Commission on the Future of Regis University) to examine the ways in which the university affected the development of leadership in its young adult students. The task force included women and men from all parts of the country, many of them

leaders themselves in business, education and other professions. They met on separate occasions during a nineteen-month period with students; faculty; officers in charge of admissions, financial aid, student life, and athletics; people involved in campus ministry; members of the Jesuit religious community; and redesigners of the university's curriculum.

Out of these conversations came a broad array of recommendations presented by the task force to the Board of Trustees and through that body to the Regis administration. It was assumed by the members of the task force that every student has leadership potential, although some have it in greater abundance than others, and that faculty and staff can influence the students' development of the qualities and skills related to leadership. They also believed that by conscious attention to curriculum, Regis educators could capitalize on the university's ideal size (about 1,000 undergraduates), enviable faculty-to-student ratio (14 to 1) and Jesuit educational tradition to attract and prepare students for leadership roles in society (these are 1983 figures). Today's enrollment is much greater and

includes distance learning.

Some specific observations and recommendations made by the leadership task force follow.

REGARDING STUDENTS

1. Students are not shaped passively into leaders. They must want to develop their leadership skills and must be encouraged to identify goals and seize opportunities to lead.

2. The very nature of leadership entails interaction in a cooperative rather than an antagonistic way. Leadership training should foster the achievement of shared goals through the combining of talents, energies and other resources in harmonious endeavors.

3. Students should be helped to realize that the roles they assume in college, including that of leadership, will help to determine the quality of persuasion, affecting not just their careers but their family, civic and church lives as well.

REGARDING FACULTY AND STAFF

1. Leadership, like any other art, is “caught” rather than intellectually taught. Faculty can further students’ acquisition of leadership ability by demonstrating its essential elements in their style and technique of teaching. Through obvious collaboration with other faculty members they can model the mutual respect, interdependence and humility required to function harmoniously in shared human endeavors.

2. In-service programs that will assist faculty and staff to understand the characteristics of leadership and to capitalize on opportunities to nurture and reinforce leadership potential should be presented annually.

3. Leaders make decisions according to their personal values and those of their followers. Students should be helped to become aware of their own values, those of their peers and those prevalent in the world that surrounds them. Values conducive to constructive efforts must be fostered; destructive values must be recognized as such. Consequently, faculty should address changing values and trends in their everyday teaching.

4. Faculty and staff at every opportunity should give encouragement and support to thoughtful decision-making inside and outside the classroom, as well as to serious decision-making about life options.

5. Recognition should be given to commendable

Students should be helped to become aware of their own values, those of their peers and those prevalent in the world that surrounds them.

leadership performance by students.

6. Students should be taught to develop their leadership abilities through collaborative service of others, both on and off the campus, during their academic years.

7. The concept of leadership development needs to be reviewed frequently and emphasized among faculty so that it will continue to be applied and will not be permitted to become an inoperative cliché.

REGARDING CURRICULUM

1. A liberal arts education should, in its breadth, provide students with the tools necessary for decision-making. Leadership requires cooperation, and the crucible in which the art is learned must include opportunities for close, prolonged and intense cooperation.

2. Courses on human relations can provide an understanding of human nature, interpersonal and group dynamics, motivation, modes of conflict resolution and other psychological and social issues related to the art of exercising leadership.

3. A course on the subject of leadership might well be taught by a team of faculty members from the disciplines of psychology, management science, sociology and political science.

4. Internships and field experiences for students could be arranged so that they, as participants in a seminar, could observe and later discuss various leadership styles and techniques displayed in a variety of off-campus settings and situations.

5. A course should be offered in which community leaders make presentations that display leadership situations, skills, attitudes and strategies.

Give serious consideration to the importance of developing the traits, skills and styles of leadership in all those who will act in roles likely to influence others within and outside the church.

REGARDING PROGRAMS

1. Faculty and staff, including directors of theatrical productions, faculty moderators and athletic coaches, have constant opportunities to develop leadership among students. The orientation program for new students should include a presentation that emphasizes the university's commitment to develop leaders and focuses on the opportunities for campus and community leadership available to them.

2. An annual "Leadership Week" should be established during which each class could discuss leaders in its specific academic discipline, a prominent national or international leader could be the featured speaker at a town-gown meeting, the campus newspaper could run a series of articles on campus leaders and their leadership, and films that portray leader models could be shown and discussed.

3. Business, industry and professional representatives should be invited to help the university establish leadership-training programs.

The Regis task force also recommended that leadership research be initiated on campus in order to further identify leadership characteristics, patterns of leadership, ways to challenge students successfully to exercise their leadership abilities and teaching styles and techniques most conducive to leadership development. It even went so far as to recommend that the hiring and the promotion of faculty and staff should be based in part on their proven ability to facilitate the development of leadership in students.

A committee at Regis considered ways of translating into practice these and many other suggestions made by the task force. Committee members were

reminded repeatedly by then Regis President David Clarke, S.J., of the strongest recommendation of all: "The task force strongly urges Regis University to develop the leadership potential of *all* of its students, both men and women, in keeping with the university's stated goals of educating the whole person and of preparing students for the service of humankind through an orientation of Christian values."

FORMING RELIGIOUS LEADERS

In the light of Regis' awareness of the whole world's constant need for leadership and the task force's recommendations regarding ways the university could respond to the need of its students to be educated for future roles as political, social, business, education and church leaders, there are a number of parallel recommendations that could be made to persons responsible for developing seminarians and young men and women religious as future leaders within the church and its various orders and congregations. A minimal list might include the following:

1. Give serious consideration to the importance of developing the traits, skills and styles of leadership in all those who will act in roles likely to influence others within and outside the church.

2. Assist seminarians and student religious to appreciate how urgently leadership is needed. Laity who are experienced in leading others could help to foster this awareness.

3. Create an academic climate in which leadership as a pastoral art is kept steadily in mind. Faculty and spiritual advisors can facilitate this.

4. Faculty and staff involved in formation programs could adopt guidelines similar to those suggested by the Regis task force. So could those who are designing curriculum and programs for seminarians and student religious.

5. In the course of their education, these young men and women could be apprenticed for a significant period of time to lay, clergy or religious persons who, in their ministry to others, are clearly manifesting leadership qualities, styles and skills.

6. The leadership roles and styles of Jesus, the apostles, saints, founders of religious congregations and outstanding church leaders could be used as subject matter for meditation during the years of preparation for ministry.

7. Daily newspapers, weekly news magazines and TV news programs can be used as frequent reminders and illustrations of the power and importance of leadership and can provide easily identifiable examples of a wide range of leadership styles.

8. Choice of ministry should be made (or “discerned”) while keeping in mind the relative potential of the available options to serve and benefit others through exercise of leadership.

9. The importance of learning how to foster preparation for and accomplishment of church leadership roles on the part of the laity — so that they can effectively fulfill their own God-given priesthood — should be kept foremost in the thinking of seminarians and religious during their years of education.

10. Public recognition could be given on frequent occasions to the effective leadership manifested by students in seminaries or houses of religious formation.

11. The libraries in these institutions should feature prominently a complete array of books and articles on leadership so that they could be useful for students. An up-to-date bibliography on the topic could be continually maintained and given wide distribution among faculty as well as students.

Every parish, religious house and institution, just like every family, city, nation, organization, profession and enterprise, needs leaders today and always will. They will turn up naturally. But some leaders will be educated to be better than others in their principles, motivations, competence and effectiveness. This article has been written in the hope that it will serve to remind our readers that the development of the best possible leaders for the church’s and the world’s future ought never to be left to chance. The challenge to edu-

cate others for exercising leadership, it seems to me, is an invitation to exert as great an influence as we can in co-creating God’s Kingdom. And all sincere efforts in that direction can’t help but draw the strongest of assistance from above.

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Beauty, Deep Beauty

Margaret Cessna, H.M.



“I have loved you for so long,” she whispered to me from the couch where she was resting. I sat by her side as she stroked my cheek. About to leave for home after a weekend of shared caregiving, I felt sad as she weakened physically and began to show signs of memory loss and confusion. That happened almost three years ago, but the energy, love and intensity of that moment have lifted me beyond sadness and created a pillow of comfort and gratitude that I rely on to this moment.

My mother died today. As I experienced overwhelming grief at the loss of a true-life companion, I realized in a guilt-filled way that I was deeply relieved, as well. She had suffered for almost three years from a debilitating form of dementia. Her beauty was deep: skin deep, heart deep and soul deep. She always took pride in how she looked and how she took care of herself. She loved without reserve. She was filled with faith and hope. Her illness stripped so much away that she did not seem to be the mother that I had treasured all of my life. But she was. Still. And forever.

Having five brothers and an alpha male father drove us together early. We did “girl” things. We cleaned and cooked. We shopped. Enjoyed musical theater. Planned, bought and wrapped gifts.

Always ready for a good conversation, she talked, debated, agreed or disagreed with anyone who stopped in for a visit and a cup of coffee or a game of cards.

Shared books and magazines. We found pockets of time and sacred spaces to escape the testosterone-filled atmosphere.

KINDNESS AND WARMTH

Despite the guys, she created a home filled with kindness and warmth. All were welcome, and many responded to her hospitality and generosity. Always ready for a good conversation, she talked, debated, agreed or disagreed with anyone who stopped in for a visit and a cup of coffee or a game of cards.

She had been a budding writer who won a trip to a college summer workshop in writing with an essay she wrote as a teen-ager. Not bad for a young girl from a tiny Pennsylvania town. It was the closest she ever got to attending college because her marriage at a young age and caring for her young children never allowed her time to pursue or develop that gift. She was a reader, though, sneaking a chapter here and there when the

kids were asleep. Kids grown, she walked often to the neighborhood library to stock up on books, her favorite pastime.

How cruel it seemed that it was her mind that went first. How lucky were we that her heart embraced us up to the end.

There have been many moments these last few years when I could not catch my breath and thought that I would suffocate from the thought of losing this lovely presence in my life. And then I remember her touch on my cheek and the words that I will never forget. And I breathe again.

My mother died today. But she is still here in the morning sun, in the first cup of freshly brewed coffee, in the wonder of a well-written paragraph or a chapter from a new book. She is here in her children and grandchildren. She is here in all she taught us. She is here in our memories and in our hearts. She is still here in all the things that mattered to her. And even though I would prefer the warmth of her physical presence, this will do for now.

And so I say, with love and gratitude, as I write about her today: "This one, Mum, this one is for you."



Sister Margaret Cessna, H.M., is a sister of the Humility of Mary; she was a high school teacher for twenty-five years. She founded and served as Executive Director of Heartbeats, which offers a unique networking opportunity for women, minority and developing world artists to market their art to the world.

Surrendering to God's Plan for Us

Gerald M. Fagin, S.J.



More than 450 years ago, Ignatius of Loyola shared with the Christian community his wisdom about discerning God's will and making faith-filled decisions. His own gift of noticing and understanding the touch of God in his soul enabled him to articulate his well-known Rules for Discernment. They are guidelines for sifting through the movements of God in the human heart and in the events of life so that Christians can discover God's call. The passion of Ignatius' life was to know God's will and to "love and serve the Divine Majesty in all things" (Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, n. 243).

Ignatius emerges in the history of Christian spirituality as a master and mentor of discernment, yet his own life is a story of plans and decisions that seldom worked out as he first envisioned them. In fact, his life can be narrated as the recurring failure of "Plan A" and the grace-filled surrender to "Plan B."

Ignatius' first Plan A was his vain hope to become a great knight and to win the hand of a lady beyond his station in life. His unhappy encounter with a cannonball at the battle of Pamplona and, during his convalescence at the Loyola castle, the overpowering work of God's grace led to his decision to become a knight of God by imitating the saints and following the path of a solitary pilgrim to Jerusalem. He abandoned his Plan A and made a passionate commitment to a new Plan B of love and service. After surrendering his

knightly sword at the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat, he planned to spend a few days in Manresa. A few days became eleven months, and during that time his new plan was purified and transformed by God. He would no longer be a solitary pilgrim intent on being a great saint. Rather, he would be a person of the church committed to “helping souls.” At the same time, he held on to his dream to journey to Jerusalem and to spend his life there working to convert unbelievers to Christ. As the story unfolded, he did make his way as a pilgrim to Jerusalem, but when he asked to stay there, the Franciscan Provincial in charge of the holy places commanded Ignatius to leave. Ignatius protested that his plan was a clear call from God discerned for many months at Manresa, but the Provincial threatened to excommunicate him. So Ignatius accepted in obedience that his current Plan A was finally not God’s will for him, at least for the moment.

MEETING WITH THE HOLY FATHER

Ignatius’ new plan was to continue his education so he could more effectively “help souls.” After several false starts in the schools of Spain, Ignatius graduated from the University of Paris. While there, he gathered a group of fellow students who shared his vision. They eventually took vows of poverty and chastity and a vow to go to Jerusalem to spend their lives there. But the boat to the Holy Land did not sail that year, and so they resorted to their agreed-upon Plan B — to present themselves to the Holy Father to be at his disposal to serve where needed in the church. In Rome, they discerned that they would stay together as a religious order, the Society of Jesus.

Ignatius’ final Plan A was to be a member of this community of friends in the Lord and to go wherever the pope decided the church at the time needed him. Instead, Ignatius, after great resistance, was elected and agreed to be Superior General of the Jesuits and spent the rest of his life in Rome directing the new religious order and its ministries and writing its Constitutions.

His plans to be a great knight, to spend his life in Jerusalem, to go with his companions to Jerusalem and to be a missionary sent at the Pope’s command — none of these “Plan A’s” were realized; in each case, God crafted a new “Plan B” that led Ignatius to places of which he never dreamed or imagined. (It may be humbling to Jesuits to realize that the Society of Jesus is Plan B, but we can be reassured by the fact that often

For Ignatius, the great desires and plans that he thought were designed and blessed by God were seemingly thwarted by human decisions and unforeseen events.

in Ignatius’ life “Plan B” was God’s true plan for Ignatius and God’s people.)

For Ignatius, the great desires and plans that he thought were designed and blessed by God were seemingly thwarted by human decisions and unforeseen events. His dream of being a great knight was destroyed by a battle wound. His noble desire to spend his life in Jerusalem “helping souls” was twice frustrated by obstacles beyond his control. His hope of being a great apostle or missionary in challenging places was left unfulfilled by his call to lead the Society of Jesus from Rome. This is not to say that in any or all of these cases God willed or orchestrated the failure of Ignatius’ plans or put obstacles in Ignatius’ way but, in each case, God used the circumstances to place a new path under Ignatius’s feet and to bring about great good for others and achievements far greater than Ignatius ever envisioned.

FOR MANY, GOD’S PLAN SEEMS CLEAR

Of course, each new plan along the way was the result of a new and open discernment by Ignatius. Put another way, he was learning the importance of confirmation of his discernment and how that confirmation was a long process played out not simply in his heart, but in the events and circumstances of his life. In each case, Ignatius had to discern whether he was called to overcome the obstacles in his way or to see in the obstacles an invitation to a new path.

For many people, God’s plan may seem clear from the beginning, and it never changes. Their lives follow a graced path laid out before them. They always wanted to be a doctor or a teacher or a priest or a religious sister. They had dreamed of being married and raising

For some communities, the question must be faced whether the community will continue to exist or whether the remaining members are to join other communities.

a family. Their adolescent dreams became, for the most part, a reality, and they have lived that reality faithfully and generously.

Others, however, are thrust into "Plan B." There are crippling accidents, debilitating illnesses, loss of a loved one, loss of a job, events that are beyond their control — all of which change their lives in dramatic ways. Think of a concert pianist whose hands are crushed in an accident, a medical student who fails out of medical school, a couple excited about starting a family who discover they cannot have children of their own, a politician intent on helping the poor who is not re-elected, a creative and visionary project that is not funded, the death of a spouse envisioned as a partner for one's later years. Think of any dream or hope, large or small, that becomes impossible to realize or sustain in one's life. Think of all the "Plan A's" that never become a reality, or, at some stage, become just a memory.

FINDING THE GRACE TO TRUST

Many people have responded to such circumstances, not in passive resignation or loss of hope, but with imagination and creativity. These are people who thought their lives were clearly laid out, only to discover that their lives were to take a new path. They were challenged to reevaluate their life goals and dreams and discover a new way to live in hope, a new meaning in their life circumstances. They found the grace to trust that God can bring good out of a difficult situation and set a new direction in a person's life.

Others are not forced by circumstances into a different life plan. Rather, they are invited by God to

choose alternate paths, to respond to new opportunities and needs or to seek new ways of service, not because the old way is no longer possible, but because a new way has suddenly opened up. A plan with which they were comfortable and that seemed blessed by God is replaced by creative initiatives and new demands. People change careers or ministries in midlife or in their later years. People are asked to take on special challenges and responsibilities and to contribute in ways they never expected. These are opportunities for a fresh start, a different perspective, an engagement of long-neglected gifts. Such new adventures often create struggle and hardship. They demand letting go of accustomed ways and embracing God's call to move forward and grow in new ways.

FINDING THE TRUST TO LET GO

The question in all these examples is how God is calling us, or at least supporting us, on a new path, a surprisingly different way of proceeding. How are the circumstances before us, however puzzling or challenging or even disheartening, an opportunity for God to do something new? How do we find the trust to let go of our original plans and encounter God in these new circumstances? How do we discover new life and new energy in a path we would not have chosen, or even imagined, on our own initiative?

For example, most religious communities today are facing diminishment and aging. What is "Plan B" for these religious communities? How are they to re-envision and live out their charisms and re-direct or re-define their ministries? What will be the role of lay associates and partners in ministry? What new model of sponsorship should give identity to their apostolates? For some communities, the question must be faced whether the community will continue to exist or whether the remaining members are to join other communities.

The wider church, as well, is being challenged by circumstances and by new awareness to explore different approaches to life and ministry and church structures. The reluctance to let go of old ways — the way we have done things — can lead to denial and stifling of the spirit. Not every new path is an authentic one, but it should not be surprising that God would offer the grace to find life and meaning in even difficult circumstances and to make what seems at first a disappointment or missed opportunity into a way of new life.

GROWTH OF LAY MINISTRY

For instance, what is God calling the church to in light of the growing shortage of priests? Is the church simply to stay with “Plan A,” or should alternative approaches be explored? Certainly the growth of lay ministry is one way God is calling the church to envision imaginative ways of spreading the Gospel and caring for God’s people. The involvement of the laity is not Plan B in the sense of a less desirable necessity brought on by the decline in ordained ministry, but perhaps God’s plan to affirm the baptismal charism and gifts of all Christians to be of service in promoting God’s reign. The early church struggled with accepting “Plan B” of preaching the gospel to the gentiles when it became clear that God had a greater and more inclusive plan to reach out to all the nations. Today, how can church leaders and all the people in the church that are resistant to let go of past ways that have long seemed to be God’s plan embrace creative ideas and expanded horizons? What are the “Plan B’s” God has designed for the Christian community in the twenty-first century?

Ignatius’ life is one example of the grace and gift of Plan B. In fact, his life was a series of surrenders to Plan B. Ignatius witnessed to the fact that God can bring an even greater good out of what at first seems a less desirable option or even a tragedy. Ignatius has taught us a great deal about discernment but, more importantly, he has taught the importance of freedom, the freedom to hear and embrace the grace of Plan B.

REMAINING OPEN TO GOD’S CALL

With regard to freedom, the challenge is often to let go of what we perceive to be the better way, what we in fact may be convinced is for the greater good of all. We may be reluctant to let go of Plan A because we have invested our energy in it and it seems inseparably connected to our own hopes and desires. We may even be certain that our plan is the only way to serve God and build the Reign of God. Ignatius recognized in his own life that the fundamental prerequisite of genuine discernment was the freedom to be at balance, to remain open to the call of God and always to have the flexibility to do the exact opposite of what he was doing at any moment if it became clear that God was calling him in a new direction. He emphasized the need for ongoing

Today, how can church leaders and all the people in the church that are resistant to let go of past ways that have long seemed to be God’s plan embrace creative ideas and expanded horizons?

confirmation of decisions, especially as we confront new circumstances and challenges. He assures us that Plan B can truly be God’s plan for us. What was, at one time, a good plan may no longer be so in a different time with different demands and opportunities. We can find God in new places, new relationships and new ministries. All this is rooted in a radical trust in God’s desires for us and God’s fidelity toward us. This trust in God is the foundation of surrender to God’s call to Plan B. In the end, our fidelity is not to any plan or way of doing, but to God.

At times, Plan B is thrust upon us by circumstances. At other times, it is a new avenue in response to discerning the signs of the times. In whatever way we may experience the call to embrace Plan B, Ignatius, both in his life and in his teachings, can guide us in our personal lives and in a time of transition in church and in society. He can show us the way to discern the call of God in openness and trust.



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Sparring With Muhammad Ali

James Torrens, S.J.

Sparring With Muhammad Ali

If I don't get this right,
you will box my ears
who proclaimed yourself the Greatest.

Look, I can kiss the ground
or touch my forehead to it
and still rise to be a contender.

I can flub a round or two,
come away with a sealed eye
but keep my world-class standing.

None can be great like me!
Knock-your-block-off great?
No, one-of-a-kind will do.

Muhammad Ali has got me thinking about humility. The subtitle of his autobiography, *Soul of a Butterfly*, does not hesitate to proclaim its author "The Greatest of All Time." These words derive from his well-known phrase, "When you're as great as I am, it's hard to be humble." We can, in fact, allow Muhammad Ali his self-crowning as the greatest of boxers. I myself am inclined to Joe Louis; a recent film touts Jack Johnson, and a new biography claims that distinction for Sugar Ray Robinson. But let's be generous and admit Ali's claim.

Whoever be greatest, Ali's saying raises a question: Is humility inconsistent with greatness? Our celebrity culture disdains humility and makes it well nigh impossible for those up there on the pedestal. There are plenty of devil's advocates to say, for their own part, "Good riddance to this

antique attitude." Black Power spokesmen, leaders of the Women's Movement, advocates for the disabled can be expected to chime in, "The last thing any of us needs is humility." And they would have reason. Enforced humility, of which history is rife with examples, is an affront to human dignity.

That our culture has rejected humility as a value is owing greatly to Friedrich Nietzsche and his attack on Christianity as propounding a slave, or flock, morality. Christianity, he claimed, cultivates peaceful ways of living out of a dread of pain and a longing for bliss. It encourages equal rights and sympathy with all suffering. Instead of faith, Nietzsche urged us to pursue strong individuality and strong will, the dependability of superior beings, severity of demands, an aristocratic ego. According to Barbara Tuchman the historian, in her book *The Proud Tower*, this attitude was much in the air at the turn of the last century. She calls this attitude "Neroism" and finds it dominant, for example, in the music of Richard Strauss.

One does not have to be a philosopher to be suspicious of humility; there are so many counterfeits. In literature we have an unforgettable image of bogus humility in Uriah Heep, from *David Copperfield* by Dickens. Here is David as an adolescent meeting this odd lawyer's clerk for the first time.

"I suppose you are quite a great lawyer?" I said after looking at him for some time. "Me, Master Copperfield?" said Uriah. "Oh, no! I'm a very umble person . . . I am well aware that I am the umblest person going," said Uriah Heep modestly, "let the other be what he may. My mother is likewise a very umble person. We live in an umble abode, Master Copperfield, but have much to be thankful for. My father's former calling was umble. He was a sexton."

"What is your father doing now?" David asks him. "He is a partaker in glory," Uriah piously answers. All the time Heep is scheming to deepen his employer's alcoholism, manipulate the books, take over his practice and with it the hand of his daughter Agnes.

Despite all the negative reports, though, humility is not to be so easily dismissed. Common sense and good instincts recoil from arrogance, pomp, display and the overuse of the first-person singular. We still today flinch at the antics of certain superstars whom we call "hot dogs."

While I was teaching at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, from 1968-70, Muhammad Ali came to campus. He had just been reinstated in boxing after three years' suspension for declaring conscientious objection as a member of the Church of Islam, during the Vietnam War. This was a courageous and costly stand. The African-American students followed his matches with enthusiasm. But when Ali was driven around the football field in front of the stands proclaiming, "I am the greatest," the students did not take it well. "We," not "I," was their concern in those tense years.

Winston Churchill once heard someone discussing a prominent person and saying, "He is a very humble man." Churchill shot back, "He should be. He has a lot to be humble about." I am uplifted by this quip. It is very helpful to me, after the wear and tear of decades. Who of us doesn't have a lot to be humble about? Our failings can humble us. So can our encounter with a goodness that far surpasses ours — with someone who donates an organ, or bears illness cheerily or faces up to threats of death. Churchill himself gets blamed for catastrophic British losses at Gallipoli in World War I. That must have led him a few steps into humble-thinking.

"Humble-thinking," *tapeinophrosuné*, is list-

ed among the genuine qualities of spirit that Saint Paul proposes to the Colossians (3:12). Even today, we do not lack for accomplished people — teachers and employers and athletes — who give evidence of it. They tell of Bishop Kenneth Untener of Saginaw, recently deceased, that on the day he was consecrated bishop he said to the people simply, "Hi, I'm Ken. I will be your waiter." He lived up to that commitment. He did not have his own house as bishop but traveled around from parish to parish to be with his priests and people.

Jesus, of course, commended humility, as St. Matthew tells us: "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves" (11:29). These words would no doubt draw a knowing scowl from Nietzsche. Still, what strikes us about Jesus is his assertiveness. Nothing mousy about him as he faced the religious leaders; he was no doormat. But neither was there any megalomania, that deadly trap for charismatic messiahs. As Paul reminded the Philippians, quoting a liturgical hymn, "He humbled himself" (2:8). How did he do that? By not standing on his dignity, his inherent greatness. Anybody at all could have access to Jesus, outcasts included. Most important, he did not work out his own plan but took his lead always from the One who had sent him on this mission.

Humility has to be born of reverence, not of putting ourselves down. It presupposes a sense of the greatness of God and of our own creatureliness. At the death of Louis XIV of France, the Sun King, *Louis le Grand*, Bishop Bossuet in the pulpit reminded everyone, "*Dieu seul est grand*," God alone is Great. That presumably is the message, too, of the First Letter of Peter: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God" (5:6). The psalms and the wisdom books of the Hebrew

Testament keep talking of "fear of the Lord." The phrase has such a negative ring to our ears, yet is saying a very basic thing. To revere God is "the beginning of wisdom."

Each of us is specially gifted, in an unrepeatable way. We are meant to exercise our gifts in cooperation with God. "It is God who gives us desire and accomplishment" (Philippians 2:13). That may sound threatening to our initiative, but really God waits on our imagination, our decision, our energetic action. Out of love and respect, God takes a great risk with us, entrusts to us a major role in the plan of salvation. That should make us humble, if nothing else does.

Humility plays its part in the transformation of the ego initiated by our union with the divine. Gerald May, in his book on saints Teresa and John of the Cross, *The Dark Night of the Soul*, exclaims, "Most of us don't realize how united we are with God." Our existence consists in a "deep and irrevocable communion with the divine." We don't get rid of the ego, the self; how could we possibly? We don't cease to be a unique package of traits and qualities. But our call is to be de-centered, as May goes on to explain: "A direct experience of union or deep intimacy ... requires a certain sacrifice of our self-image as separate and distinct. We become vulnerable, less in control." As our attachments are reduced and our openness to God increased, "increasingly one feels a part of all things instead of apart from them."

May thus helps us to manage a very difficult saying of Saint Paul: "Humbly regard others as more important than yourself" (Philippians 2:3). What does that mean? It does not mean to discount one's own worth or yield always to others the better part. I think it says to regard others as very much a part of oneself. They deserve my full attention and even, out of love for their good and

their spiritual growth, my yielding my place. Family and religious community life and harmony in ministry depend on our empathy and mutual appreciation, and on the ready exchange of the irreplaceable gifts that each of us brings. Paul quotes the Christological hymn to his dear Philippians, after all, precisely to clarify and strengthen their mutual relations. That is the framework in which he centers the non-clinging of Jesus to his godhead.

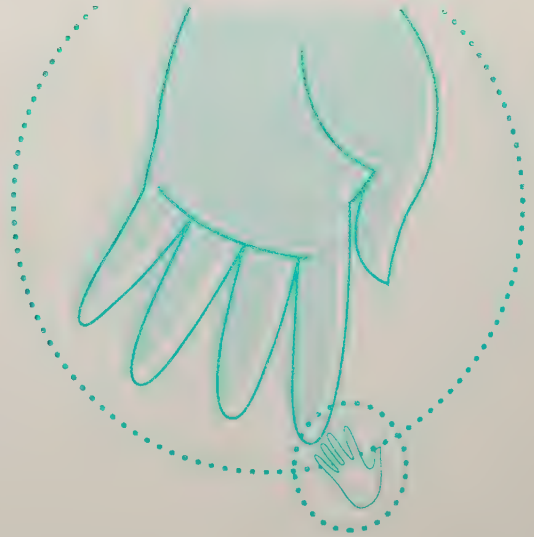
So how about Muhammad Ali? His life, both public and private life, his aging and his Parkinson's have traced their own borders around his claims for himself, which have to be partly stage stuff and tongue-in-cheek anyway. The real fact, not at all inconsistent with humility, is that we are all created to be great. I find authentic greatness in the well-known prayer that Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the United Nations, left in his journals, published after his death as *Markings*. He begins: "Have mercy upon us. / Have mercy upon our efforts, that we / Before thee, in love and in faith, / Righteousness and humility, / May follow thee." Hammarskjöld died when his plane crashed in the middle of Zaire, as he was trying to ward off secession and civil war in the young country. He was the very image of a true public servant, that is, humble and great.



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Christian MATURITY through Ignatian Spirituality

William A. Barry, S.J.



The following article is based on a talk given at the first James J. Gill Symposium held at Regis University June 3-4, 2005. – The Editor.

Some of the articles in this issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT concern formation. Perhaps because of my training as a clinical psychologist I think in terms of personal and interpersonal development as part of the formation of a person toward Christian maturity. As a result, I have come to believe that the process of making the full Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* can be likened to the development of a friendship, in this case, a friendship with God, and in particular with the Son of God.

It is intriguing to explore the idea that God creates us human beings for friendship. Liz Carmichael, an Anglican priest and a medical doctor, has written a scholarly study of the notion of friendship with God through the history of Christianity. The book, *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love*, shows how the idea of friendship with God has had periods of brilliant illumination in this history followed by long periods of a seeming loss of memory of the idea. It seems that the idea of friendship with God both intrigues us and worries us. But some very solid theologians have held the thesis that we are created for friendship with God, including Aelred of Rivaux and Thomas Aquinas. I have found the idea stimulating and challenging both in my own prayer life and in my thinking. I have

Friendship is a matter of the heart, of revealing what is in one's heart to the other in mutuality.

used it in my work as a director of the *Spiritual Exercises* and in helping others to become directors. So far, God has not indicated that I am mistaken on this one.

We begin with a description of the development of any friendship. There are some clear steps and stages in the developing of a deep friendship. First, there needs to be an initial attraction. Without some initial attraction we will not take the time and expend the energy to become a friend of another. When something about the other attracts or intrigues us, we do something to initiate contact. You walk over to the person and introduce yourself, for example, or you ask to be introduced. At first, the conversation will be somewhat superficial. You exchange names and some data about yourselves. If the relationship is to develop into a friendship, the two of you will begin to talk about more important things in your lives. For example, you want to know not only how many brothers and sisters the other has, but also which ones she liked and which ones she found more difficult to like, not only what type of work she does, but also how she likes it and what she gets from it.

A MATTER OF THE HEART

Friendship is a matter of the heart, of revealing what is in one's heart to the other in mutuality. It is a gradual process as each of you feels your way in this new relationship. Of course, eventually you both want to know how the other feels about you, another risk in transparency. If all goes well, there follows something like a honeymoon period when both of you delight in one another's company and want to spend as much time together as possible.

This idyllic period is disrupted when negative feelings arise. One of you becomes angry at the other; or

one of you wonders if the other would still want to be a friend if she knew some secret that is shameful. The temptation is to keep this disturbing aspect secret. The trouble with such disturbing thoughts and emotions, however, is that one cannot leave them behind and get on with the relationship as though they never occurred. They are like magnets that attract other emotions and thoughts to them so that eventually you talk only about superficial things because the unspoken emotion or thought cannot be mentioned. The only way forward in the friendship is to take the risk of speaking about these disturbances with one another. The risk is that the budding friendship will be destroyed; the gain, however, is that a friendship can actually bloom. This stage can be likened to psychologist Erik Erikson's stage of intimacy where people grow in their ability to love and be loved as adults.

Eventually the two friends may have so solidified their friendship that they begin to think of doing something together. One outcome for a man and a woman would be to decide to get married and have a family. But friends can also engage in other projects together. At this stage their friendship focuses less on themselves and more on the larger world; they are at what Erikson calls the generative stage of development. Their conversations and self-revelations often are about the project or the family rather than about their relationship itself, though that is never forgotten.

SHARING PAINFUL TIMES

Any friendship that lasts a long time faces the pain of sickness and the death of one of the friends. When serious illness strikes, the friendship faces a new crisis; will the two be able to continue to share deeply during this painful and anxiety-provoking time? Even the closest of friends find it difficult to confront pain and debilitating illness; in addition, each may want to spare the other from knowing how difficult it is either to have the illness or to watch it in the other. If they do not share their pain and suffering, they may find themselves growing distant from one another, leading to even more pain and loneliness. Again, growth in the friendship can only come through mutual self-revelation, and at this time the mutual self-revelation can be painful indeed. But it can also be a time of recalling the good times and of thanking one another and God for the blessings of the friendship. In spite of the present pain it is much better "to have loved and lost than

never to have loved at all.” This final growth in the relationship can lead to something like the wisdom Erikson posits as the final stage, a wisdom whose opposite is despair.

Now let’s see if this analogy works as a descriptor for the progression one can experience in friendship with God through the experience of making the full *Spiritual Exercises*. Ignatius begins the process with a reflection on “The Principle and Foundation,” a rather dry and almost catechism-like paragraph.

Human beings are created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by means of doing this to save their souls.

The other things on the face of the earth are created for the human beings, to help them in the pursuit of the end for which they are created.

From this it follows that we ought to use these things to the extent that they help us toward our end, and free ourselves from them to the extent that they hinder us from it.

To attain this it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things, in regard to everything which is left to our free will and is not forbidden. Consequently, on our own part we ought not to seek health rather than sickness, wealth rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, a long life rather than a short one, and so on in all other matters.

Rather, we ought to desire and choose only that which is more conducive to the end for which we are created (Spiritual Exercises, n. 23).

One can reflect on these words and come to the realization that they are true, but I do not think that they have their desired effect without an experience of God, an experience that makes God supremely attractive. I believe that this abstract statement is based on Ignatius’ experience of God as the mysterious Other who creates us out of overwhelming and generous love and continues to sustain us at every moment of our lives. Ignatius believed that all human beings have experiences of God’s creative and sustaining love and that if we pay attention to these experiences we will find that during them we desire God with all our heart and, at the same time, feel an enormous sense of well-being. Caught up in this experience we do feel that

A long life or a short life, sickness or health, riches or poverty, these are all relative in comparison to the Mystery we desire.

everything and everyone beside the object of this desire pales in comparison; we want this Mystery more than we want anything or anyone else. We become, for the moment at least, “indifferent” in the sense Ignatius means the word; we would not want to choose anything that would take us away from the object of this desire for “we know not what” the Mystery we call God. A long life or a short life, sickness or health, riches or poverty, these are all relative in comparison to the Mystery we desire.

CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

I believe that this experience of being created out of love and for love underlies the abstract words of the Principle and Foundation. If we pay attention to experiences such as these, we recognize that we are being drawn into a closer relationship with God, to friendship. When we relish such experiences, we desire to be with God, and we engage in something like a “honeymoon” period in our relationship with God. These experiences reflected on and savored provide the firm foundation upon which we and God can build a deepening friendship.

However, there are many people who find it difficult to believe in such experiences of God as caring and loving. Poor and abusive parenting leaves some people with an image of father or mother as someone to be feared; this image is easily transferred to God. For others, teaching about God in childhood leaves them with an image of God who is terrifying and threatening. For some reason, one of the men who became one of the first Jesuits, Pierre Favre (Peter Faber), had a terrible image of God when he met Ignatius when both were students in Paris. Ignatius worked with him for four years before he would allow him to make the *Exercises*. I presume that Ignatius was helping him to

One needs to have an experience of God creating us because of a desire for closeness and friendship with us.

trust in experiences of God as caring and loving, whose plans are for our good, not to try us and find us wanting. Eventually, through what we might call pastoral counseling or spiritual direction, Pierre was ready to enter the *Exercises*. He had the foundation of an experienced-based trust in God's desire for his good and his friendship that enabled him to engage with God in the *Spiritual Exercises*. I have worked with such scrupulous people to help them to such an experienced-based trust in God. It is difficult work, but rewarding when through experience a new image of God begins to take hold. The process that a person engages when making the *Spiritual Exercises* requires a deep trust in God's love and care. One needs to have an experience of God creating us because of a desire for closeness and friendship with us.

(An aside: in the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius gives a number of suggestions for prayer. One of them advises the retreatant, just before beginning a prayer period, to "raise my mind and think how God our Lord is looking at me, and other such thoughts" (*Spiritual Exercises* n. 75). Ignatius presumes that God is always interested in us, always aware of us. Recently, when I used this long-forgotten advice, I found myself awed by the thought that God was waiting for me to be aware of God. In other words, God always wants us and our friendship.)

REALIZING WE HAVE FALLEN SHORT

After some time of enjoyment of this "honeymoon" period we become aware that something is amiss. We know that we are all created for friendship with God and that God wants a world in which human beings share in this friendship and live harmoniously with God, one another and with the environment. But the world is not like this, and we realize that the world and

we have fallen short of what God wants. A disturbance is introduced into the relationship with God. In the story of the Garden of Eden in the Book of Genesis the garden itself and the fact that the humans are naked and unashamed before God and one another depicts the way things were created to be. The disturbance I am speaking about is depicted after the first human beings have eaten the forbidden fruit in an effort to become like God. They become afraid, clothe themselves and go into hiding from God. They feel ashamed and unworthy of God's friendship and expect punishment. In the *Spiritual Exercises* the retreatant who begins to feel this way is embarking on what Ignatius calls the "First Week," a period of facing up to one's sins and failures and the sins and failures of our human world. The question faced is a stark one: "Does God still want my friendship after all that I have done? Does God still love our human world given the mess we humans have made of it?"

Moreover, because I cannot see my own sinfulness, I have to ask God to reveal my sins to me, to reveal how God sees me and the world. To ask God for such revelation is impossible unless one has had an experience of God as caring and loving; hence, the need of the "principle and foundation" experience. Even with that experience in hand, people find it difficult to ask God for such a revelation. But when they do ask, they find that the revelation is for their good, that God wants to forgive them and still wants their friendship. In the *Exercises* Ignatius advises the retreatant who has a felt knowledge of sin to have a conversation with Jesus on the cross, and adds: "A colloquy (conversation) is made, properly speaking, in the way one friend speaks to another, or a servant to one in authority — now begging a favor, now accusing oneself of some misdeed, now telling one's concerns and asking counsel about them." Notice the first analogy, "friend to friend." Those who can look Jesus in the eyes and find in them love and forgiveness feel a great sense of relief. People who ask God to show them their sins and the sinfulness of the world discover, to their delight, that, along with the shame and tears they experience for the way they have lived, they are freed of a tremendous burden. With a great sigh of relief they realize that God still loves them and the world, still wants their friendship. They have traversed the stage of intimacy and the difficulties of realizing how far they and the world have fallen short of what God wants and still feel loved and welcomed by God.

For those who are making the full *Spiritual Exercises* the next step comes with the welling up of the desire to know Jesus more intimately in order to love him more and to follow him more closely. They want Jesus to reveal himself, what makes him tick, what he loves and hates, what he dreams, and thus to fall in love with him and work with him. They enter the stage of generativity, if you will. They now want to walk the road of life with Jesus as their friend and companion. This stage, too, has its ups and downs as it becomes clearer what being a companion of Jesus will entail. After all, if we become his companions, we are liable to meet the same obstacles and enmity he met and suffer the same fate.

PERSEVERING IN FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS

The director of the *Exercises* helps the retreatant deal with the attraction and the repulsion of being a companion of Jesus. Those who persevere in this growing friendship with Jesus find themselves becoming freer of the attachments that hinder them from following the way of Jesus, of joining him in pursuing God's project in this world. They deepen their friendship with Jesus and want to be with him, no matter the consequences. Those who come this far in friendship with Jesus have that emotional maturity Freud spoke of; they have the ability to love and to work.

Retreatants who walk with Jesus to Jerusalem find themselves wanting, and perhaps dreading, to share with him his passion and death. They are ready to enter what Ignatius calls the "Third Week" of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Again they are asking Jesus to reveal himself to them, but this time it is the hard revelation of what it was like for him to go through this terrible week trusting in his Father when he had no one else in whom to trust.

Retreatants will find this period of the *Exercises* difficult. It is painful to see Jesus, who has now become a close friend, go through this agony, abandoned by his friends, betrayed by one of them, accused of leading the people astray by the leaders of his own religion, flogged, beaten and hung naked on a Roman cross to die a horrible death. Those who contemplate these scenes often find themselves resisting the revelation they desire. They may focus on all the other characters in the scenes rather than on Jesus; they may find them-

Those who persevere in this growing friendship with Jesus find themselves becoming freer of the attachments that hinder them from following the way of Jesus, of joining him in pursuing God's project in this world.

selves angry with God for allowing this horror. If they continue to ask Jesus to reveal himself, they will find themselves drawn into a deeper love for him and a deeper sympathy. One woman whom I directed wept with relief when Jesus finally died. In this week it becomes most clear that consolation does not necessarily mean feeling joyful and happy because here the consolation we ask for brings a heavy load. But as with two friends who share the pain of illness and dying, it is consoling to share Jesus' pain and suffering and loneliness.

THE JOY OF THE RESURRECTION

Moreover, it is the only real way to experience the joy of the resurrection. The risen Jesus tells the two disciples on the road to Emmaus: "Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" (Lk 24: 26). I take this necessity not as an eternal decree of God making it necessary, but as a statement that to be the Messiah he now is, he had to go through this suffering. He still has the wounds even in glory; the horror is not undone by the resurrection. Rather, with the resurrection we find that the crucifixion and death are not the last word. God, in Jesus, received the worst we humans could devise. This worst is the victory of God. And God has not retaliated against us by annihilating us. God is forgiving love, and even the worst we can do will not deter God from the desire to embrace us in friendship. The joy of the resurrection is the joy that Jesus is alive and well, that God has raised him bodily from the dead, and that his resurrection will be ours. Those who are given the grace to share in Jesus' joy through contemplation of the scenes of his resurrection can never despair, no matter what happens in their lives because they know in their

God cannot give me all that God wants to give me because I am not God and also because I resist the self-gift. But God wants to give me as much of Godself as is possible.

bones that Jesus is risen and that they too are one with him. They have reached a high degree of spiritual and emotional maturity indeed.

The *Spiritual Exercises* end with the “Contemplation to Attain Love,” a fitting climax to this progressive growth into a deep friendship with God. In this contemplation Ignatius makes two preliminary observations that underline the point I have been making throughout this article.

First. Love ought to manifest itself more by deeds than by words.

Second. Love consists in a mutual communication between the two persons. That is, the one who loves gives and communicates to the beloved what he or she has, or part of what one has or can have; and the beloved in return does the same to the lover. Thus, if the one has knowledge, one gives it to the other who does not; and similarly in regard to honors or riches. Each shares with the other (S.E., n. 230-231).

As will become clear, Ignatius is using the analogy of friends to speak of the relationship with God. It is extraordinary, when you think about it, to think that God wants our gifts just as much as we want God’s gifts. God has created us for such mutuality. “Each shares with the other.” In this contemplation, then, Ignatius proposes some points so that we can experience God’s prolific generosity and realize that God wants our generosity, not as a demand, but as a token of friendship. In the points Ignatius asks us to ponder them, but, in reality, he hopes that we will “contemplate,” that is, see, touch and sense what God is doing in the creation that is ongoing. The purpose of such contemplation is to draw out of us a corresponding love for God, a desire

to give God all that we are, just as God has given us all that God is.

In the first of the four points retreatants are encouraged to remember all the gifts they have received. “I will ponder with deep affection how much God our Lord has done for me, and how much he has given me of what he possesses, how consequently how he, the same Lord, desires to give me even his very self in accordance with his divine design” (S.E., n. 234). Other translations of this last phrase make the statement almost poignant: “it is the Lord’s wish, as far as he is able, to give me himself.” God cannot give me all that God wants to give me because I am not God and also because I resist the self-gift. But God wants to give me as much of Godself as is possible. That is an amazing statement. In response the retreatant is encouraged to offer God all of oneself, liberty, memory, intelligence, understanding, one’s entire will, “all that I have and possess.” The mutuality is moving toward fullness.

In the other points I ask to experience how God dwells in everything, how God labors and works for me in all of creation, and how all good things and gifts come from God. If one comes to experience the world in this way, then one is a contemplative in action, that is, one finds God in all things. A person who comes close to this ideal has reached a high level of maturity indeed. The way to such maturity, as with all progress toward maturity, is through developing relationships, in this case the relationship with God. Engaging closely with God over time will transform us into people who are more like Christ, more like the images of God we are created to be.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Barry, W. A., *Finding God in All Things: A Companion to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 1991.

Barry, W. A., *Letting God Come Close: An Approach to the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises*. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2001.

Carmichael, E.D.H., *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love*. London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2004.

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From V I C T I M to Victimizer?

Anonymous



I was a victim of sexual abuse. Will I become a perpetrator? This question is loaded with the shame, guilt and fear of forty-five years of my life. At the age of four I began to be sexually molested by my oldest brother. By the age of six I was also being molested by a Catholic priest who, I just recently learned, was also molesting my two older brothers. Was it his own experience of sexual violation that caused my oldest brother to victimize me in return? Again, a simple but loaded question for which no one can supply a definitive answer, not even my brother. Our father had been sexually and physically assaulted by a priest in his childhood. How much of my brother's behavior was influenced by an environment in which he lacked positive parenting from his father? How much was the result of his own trauma, a repetition of his own abuse caused by the psychological imprinting that results from the sexual abuse of children?

So many questions. And then there was me, molested from about the age of five until the age of ten by the priest, sexually harassed by my brother all the way into my teens. Would I be a safe parent? If I had children would I molest them? Was I a time-bomb that would one day explode without warning, wreaking havoc on my family?

I didn't ask myself these questions before I married. I wasn't aware that I needed to. I have always remembered my abuse

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because I have clear picture memories of certain events, but I had not associated any emotions with these memories. To use the psychological terminology, I was dissociated. That means there was a disconnection or a lack of connection. Briefly, dissociated experiences are not integrated into the usual sense of self, resulting in discontinuities in conscious awareness.

DISCONNECT FROM FEELINGS

In short, the events had created a traumatic shock response. This response is different from other degrees of trauma. In a shock response the feeling of powerlessness and the fear that one's life is in danger cause one to disconnect from one's feelings and to deny the severity of the event. It also causes one's memories, which are ordinarily incomplete anyway, to become severely fragmented.

So I had told myself for years that it was "not that bad;" it was "no big deal." But I had never actually confronted the fear, shame and anger associated with any of the abuse, and I had managed to forget much of the first nine years of my life, including any memories of my bedrooms. Then I married and had two sons.

The first indication that the effects of my abuse remained with me and could not be dismissed any longer occurred when my two sons were toddlers. I found I became uncomfortable bathing them. As any parent knows, toddler boys are rapturously happy with their bodies and enjoy streaking as a past-time. It is a wonderful, physical innocence. But I had a strange reaction to this stage. I became uncomfortable around my sons' bodies, even afraid. I was afraid that I would inadvertently do something or say something to rob my sons of their innocence and cause them to feel shame.

I became insecure about appropriate touch boundaries. I had to ask my husband to take over bath time. I obviously had issues, but I didn't connect it to my own abuse; I didn't believe I needed help...yet.

The second indication that I might be capable of becoming an abuser was my rage. I have no memories of expressing anger growing up; other people's anger frightened me. But when my oldest son was five, I discovered my rage, and he was the target. I sometimes shook with the effort of not hitting him. Sometimes I slapped him. Just a slap I told myself. No big deal. But it was ... because I didn't know where my anger was headed, or what I might be capable of. So I entered therapy.

THERAPY MADE THE DIFFERENCE

To begin with I felt I was in therapy for the sake of my sons, but I chose to remain in therapy for my own sake, and that is what has made the difference in my life. I have been willing to face, and I continue to confront and heal, the effects of my abuse. I am convinced that therapy is vital if victims want to avoid some form of repetition of abuse, be it sexual, physical, or emotional, on their children or on themselves. Being victimized as children may be a reason why some people become victimizers, but it is not an excuse. There is no excuse. Even though your body and your trust were violated there is no defense for violating another child and continuing the cycle.

I have not become a victimizer, but I continue to suffer the consequences of being a victim, and trust remains a major issue. When the sexual abuse is incestuous the issue of trust is more profound because by definition you are dealing with a love relationship. Sexual abuse by a priest is considered similar to the violation of incest because the priest is usually a known and trusted adult who has a relationship with the parents of the child and is perceived as a "father-figure." Sexual abuse by a priest therefore involves more than just a physical violation; it also involves an emotional violation. Someone your parents have taught you to trust, someone who has shown affection for you, has used your trust to manipulate you into sexual contact. How will you know whom to trust in the future? How will you be able to identify safe people?

Beyond the physical and emotional violation, there is a third and unique level of violation involved with sexual abuse by a priest: spiritual violation. Writer,

physician and psychiatrist Viktor Frankl, who survived a Nazi concentration camp, is famous for his insistence that discovering a meaning in life is essential to one's well-being and happiness. For people raised in a religious faith, God is viewed as the ultimate source of meaning. In the face of suffering and death, belief in a benevolent Father/Creator who will reunite you with your loved ones after you die enables many people to avoid despair. But what if your experience as a child was to be sexually violated by the man who represented God, who was God's agent on earth? This must mean that God wasn't looking out for you, that you were bad and therefore undeserving of God's love.

As a child I believed this to be true. I was bad; so God had taken away my guardian angel, and I was no longer "safe 'til morning light." As I grew up, I realized it wasn't about me; the priest was a sick man. He was evil. But did that mean that God was evil? Or perhaps there was no God after all. Victims of clergy abuse have the whole fabric of meaning created by a system of religious belief and practice ripped from their lives. They lose faith in priests, in the church and in God. In the absence of an alternative belief system, they may experience a deep spiritual despair. Many attempt suicide; too many succeed. I have been lucky; I managed to retrieve my faith in God and even in my church because for me "church" is the community of the laity not the structural hierarchy.

LEARNING ABOUT EFFECTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Through more than eight years of therapy and three hospitalizations I have learned many things about the effects of sexual abuse. I have learned that my experience of abuse will never simply be in my past, it is a part of me on every level of my "self": emotionally, psychologically, physically and spiritually. I have learned that a loving, physical touch from my husband can feel like abuse to the part of me that knew only abusive touch. I have learned that I cannot accept the theodicy of the author of Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11 who wrote that God has a plan for everything that happens; instead I have learned with Job 42: 1-6 that understanding the place of evil and suffering in a world created by a benevolent divinity is beyond our ability as humans. Instead, we have to trust. Trust in the power of Goodness, Truth and Justice. Trust, even in the face of systemic deception and immorality in our church leadership. Trust, even in the face of dogmatism and denial.

Victims of clergy abuse have the whole fabric of meaning created by a system of religious belief and practice ripped from their lives.

THE CHALLENGE: LOOK FOR GOODNESS

I am reminded again of Frankl. In, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl describes how some camp inmates would give away their last piece of bread to offer comfort to the dying. Thus, in the midst of one of the most profound evils of modern history, Frankl finds proof of the existence of conscience and, therefore, of the existence of a loving Creator. For victims of clergy sexual abuse, the challenge is likewise to look for Goodness, Truth, and Justice wherever it can be found and therein find evidence of God, even in the midst of an imperfect world and an imperfect church.

I have found that evidence in the students I teach and in the community with whom I work, a community of faith-filled men and women. I have also found God's grace in the community of fellow survivors in SNAP (Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests) and fellow Catholics in VOTF (Voice of the Faithful), and, most especially, in the community of my family in whom and through whom God continues to love me every day.

RECOMMENDED READINGS, RESOURCES

Frankl, V.E. *Man's Search for Meaning*. New York: Simon and Schuster, Pocket Books, 1985.

<http://www.snapnetwork.org/> Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP)

<http://www.votf.org/> Voice of the Faithful (VOTF)

THE VALUE OF A LIVING WILL

The Terri Schiavo case is too complicated for me to comment on because I do not know all the facts in the case. One fact, however, I do know is this: Mrs. Schiavo had no living will or other written statements of her wishes, and she had not specifically authorized anyone in writing to make decisions on her behalf.

If any lesson comes out of this bitter case, it is expressed in this statement of Dr. Arthur Caplan, director of the center for bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania: "It used to be important to have a living will. Post-Schiavo, it is essential to have a living will."

My wife Anita and I have had living wills for several years. In addition, in order to make the living will effective, we have indicated in writing who will be our health care proxy in case of incapacitation. In the event I am incapacitated she will make all the decisions about my care. In the event she is incapacitated, I will make the decisions about her care. Without naming a health care proxy in case of becoming incapacitated to make the decisions oneself, living wills may not be recognized. After designating someone as health care proxy, one should talk over with this person the living will one has written.

But what if both of us are incapacitated? Who makes the decisions then? On the advice of our attorney we have designated a person in whom we have great trust to take over and carry out our instructions. However, the Schiavo case has made us aware that we should notify our close relatives that this person is empowered to act in our names. We firmly believe that family relatives will readily accept this arrangement, but just in case someone objects to our instructions about feeding tubes, resuscitation, dialysis, our insistence that no extraordinary measures be taken to prolong our lives, burial arrangements and other end-of-life concerns, this document will safeguard our desires.

For those who think that they have plenty of time to establish a living will, let them consider this incident that happened a little over a week ago. At breakfast I was reading the death notices and came across a picture of a handsome young man who died at age 21. "Anita, here's a death notice for a young man named Joshua Dixon. Any relative of yours?"

She carefully read the death notice and said, "Yes, he's the grandson of Bob and Dorothy Dixon." Bob, who died some years ago, was Anita's first cousin.

At the wake we learned that Joshua was thrown from his motorcycle while on his way to a college evening class. We don't know if he had a living will, but he must have told his parents that in the event of his death he wanted his eyes donated to someone who lacked sight. And that was done.

Terri Schiavo was not much older than Joshua when she became unable to make decisions about her own medical care. Perhaps because she was so young, her case has ignited national interest in living wills from people of all ages.

Many Internet sites provide information about living wills and the documents needed. Two mentioned in a *New York Times* article ("The Best Way to Keep Control," March 29, 2005) are the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (www.nhpco.org), which provides free forms, and Aging with Dignity (www.agingwithdignity.org) which provides the documents for \$5.

Anita and I feel comfort in having a living will because it not only assures us that our wishes will be followed, but it also frees family members and medical professionals from having to make difficult decisions for us.

— George Eppley, Ph.D.